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ABSTRACT

This document consists of four issues of the "Journal of Educational Relations' published quarterly during 1996. The journal's motto is "Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships." Articles in the first issue of this volume include: "The Electronic Superintendent" (James Donlevy and others); "Confront Censorship Crusades with Genuine School Community Relations" (David Martinson); and "Total Quality Management Approach Appears To Generate Trust and Collegiality in Schools" (Randy Tuck and Philip West). Articles in the second issue include: "Public Education Works, Despite its Name" (Heather-jane Robertson); "Who Influenced You?" (Mel Heller and others); and "The Politics of a School Bond Issue--Don't Rely on Invalid Myths" (Frank Lutz and Robert Fields). Articles in the third issue include: "99 Ways To Increase/Improve School-Community Relations" (Albert Holliday); "Boards Need To Frame a Consensus on Public Education's Mission" (Frank Bush); and "Why Have School Costs Increased So Greatly During the Past 20 years?" (Otis Lovette). Each issue also contains a teaching or administrative case study and response, book reviews, and a short summary of a research project related to educational public relations. (HTH)

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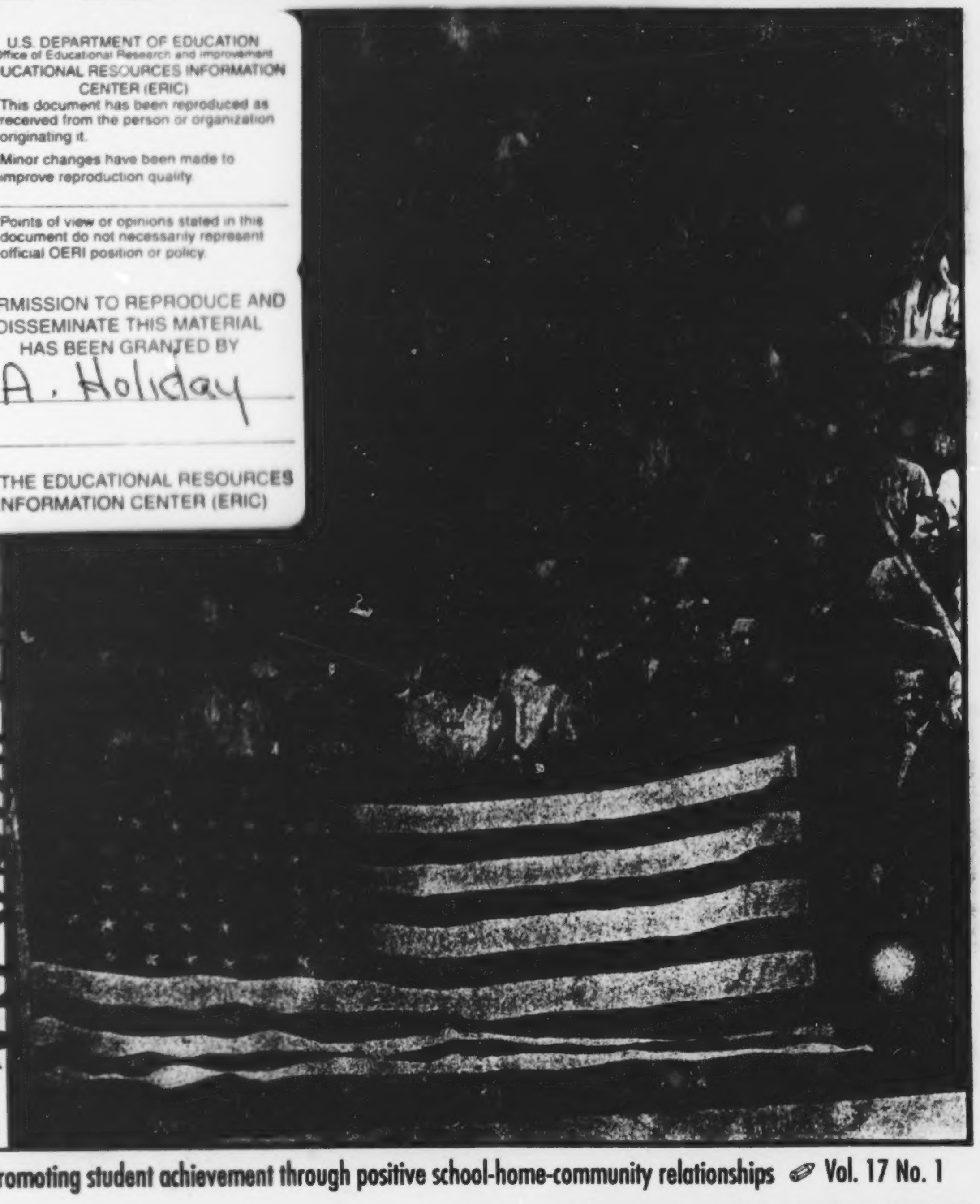

Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships ✏ Vol. 17 No. 1

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Notes From the Editor

Public Schools at Risk

When I began my work in the school-community relations field in 1963, the primary focus was to provide the kinds of information and activities that parents and citizens needed to understand and support the work of teachers and other educators.

My present view is that the function of a school-community relations program is to portray the nature of schools in a factual and realistic manner as contrasted to the community's goals (that is, what can and should be done to continue to improve schools).

Unfortunately, members of special interest groups have engaged in campaigns of misinformation, to the extent that many people believe that public education is "failing" and that radical steps are required if our youngsters are to be properly educated.

The latest campaign is to justify some form of vouchers that would be "given" to parents so they can send (or continue to send) their children to private or public schools at full or partial public expense. (See the article about Myths and Vouchers in this edition.)

People are being led to believe that vouchers have been successful in improving education (as if that would justify somehow getting around the separation of church and state issue, as cited by the courts in this century). The fact is that vouchers have not been successful. Ask their proponents to cite any place where vouchers have increased students' achievement. At least as of early 1996, there are none.

Al Shanker, in his weekly column in the New York Times (Jan. 21, 1996), writes, "Vouchers have never been shown to improve student achievement or school performance." He refers to the Milwaukee experiment of five years in which no improvements have been shown in the "student achievement of the 1,000 voucher students or students in the system as a whole."

What Does Make a Difference?

One can fairly state that continued improvements in our schools are possible and necessary. However, what "creates" excellent schools is not a function of finances or which school a student attends.

In Shanker's Jan. 21 column, he suggests that high-performance schools share four traits:

- These schools have a core curriculum that embodies high academic standards.
- They have effective discipline policies to ensure that classrooms are safe and orderly places.
- They have promotion and graduation policies that honor and demand real achievement from students.
- And they have solid professional development programs to assist teachers in helping students meet those high standards.

I would suggest that a major factor in developing these or similar traits is to initiate coalitions of people in a community — parents, citizens, educators — who can work with the board to those ends. And this factor should be an ongoing function of a district's program of school-community relations.

And here is the problem. According to research published in this Journal (Vol. 16 No. 1), we can generalize that the majority of public school districts in North America do not have programs of school-community relations in place.

Educators are too passive. Active critics will continue to undermine public education until supporters of the present system become aggressive in developing substantial and ongoing relations with citizens, business people and parents.

A.E.Holliday
Editor and Publisher

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by James G. Donlevy, Alan Hilliard and Tia Rice Donley

THE ELECTRONIC SUPERINTENDENT—

USE CABLE TV AS A COST-EFFECTIVE VEHICLE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

To enhance school-community relations, school administrators should produce local cable television programs centering on the schools and educational issues. Although the technology and low-cost means are available, such cable programs originating with school superintendents are not widely in evidence. Practical suggestions for implementing such talk shows are offered; benefits to be earned from such efforts also are identified.

Local cable television has come a long way since its inception. In fact, the proliferation of cable television channels — including those enabling public, government and education access — has given birth to a rich variety of local community-produced programs throughout the country. Such locally-produced programs often include general interest shows such as candidates for local office in debate or broadcasts of city council meetings. Other programs include school sporting events, school plays, award presentations and similar ongoing activities.

But are school superintendents harnessing the full power of cable television? Are superintendents tapping this potent tool for reaching the district's shareholders? While politicians, independent productions, and school-oriented shows can be seen readily on community access channels, local cable programming originating from the office of the superintendent of schools is not typically available.

Cable television can allow an "electronic superintendent" to reach community members in their homes at least as a supplement to standard communication channels such as newsletters and meetings, but possibly as a means to attract new attention and dialogue about school issues.

Initiate a local cable television community relations project.

A television series intended to promote a realistic and positive image for the schools will ultimately draw upon every sector of the schools' professional staff. Ideally, the superintendent will initiate the programming and oversee its productions.

At the superintendent's direction, the staff, students, parents, and community partners should be involved in the planning and production process. Broad involvement of these people is necessary to ensure their commitment and a sense of ownership. Most important, the superintendent will need to establish a working relationship with local cable company officials and the direct involvement of the company's program director in all phases of the project.

With the superintendent as chair, a district planning committee should be assembled, consisting of eight to 10 members in order to guarantee adequate representation from among the district population and to promote efficiency of action.

The planning committee's work should involve the following areas: formulating a clear mission statement, determining ongoing procedures (such as how to handle guests and invitations, interviewing guests, set location and design, student involvement, cablecasting the program), budgeting, and evaluating the program.

We recommend a talk show format with the superintendent of schools as the host. The

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, WILKESBARRE.

first program should be limited to 30 minutes. Audience and staff reactions may call for shows to run an hour after the show has been established.

Write a mission statement.

The district planning committee must answer the questions, "What are we attempting to do and for whom?" Consider this simple mission statement: The district cable television program will enhance school-community relations by informing the public about local school programs, general and specific education issues, and future plans affecting the local district population and community.

Note: A district with a large percentage of senior citizens might require a mission statement reflecting the need to involve seniors more fully in school programs and activities. Or, a district with many immigrants might benefit from a mission statement designed to encourage its newest members to participate fully in the school community.

Gather information.

Once a mission statement has been authored, it is important that the planning committee solicit as much information from the district population as possible, particularly any target groups identified in the mission statement. To provide programming that responds to the concerns of citizens, the planning committee can devise a simple brief survey and distribute it to students, staff, parents, community members, and leaders of non-profit and business organizations within the district. Survey questions should elicit information on strengths and weaknesses of the school district, positive and negative community perceptions, issues affecting specific groups of people, and significant school and community resources — including mentoring and school/business partnership possibilities. The survey form should be limited to two pages (one sheet, both sides) and receive a wide distribution via schools, organizations such as Rotary and League of Women Voters and church and social groups. (Members of the planning committee or a school association could be assigned the task of distributing and collecting survey forms.)

Set program objectives.

After the committee's review of the survey responses, specific short-term and long-term objectives can be written.

The objectives should be integrated with overall district objectives, and serve to elaborate the district vision as articulated by the school board in its interactions with the superintendent.

Determine a program plan.

Once the objectives have been established, priorities need to be determined. For example, if the program is to emphasize issues of critical concern to the school board — perhaps legal or policy issues — these items will need to be given priority.

If the plan is to focus more on concerns of parents or business people or to celebrate student success and achievement, priorities need to be set and a plan developed accordingly.

Implement the plan.
The committee needs to establish the talk show frequency and timelines. At least one show a month is suggested. Consider cablecasting one show a week during the academic year, as such a frequency will convey the importance of the program and is more likely to meet project objectives.

Select a coordinator.
At this stage, the committee should assign one person to be the show's coordinator. Depending on the show's frequency, the coordinator will need to devote time each week to ongoing duties. The coordinator can be a district employee or a part-time person in the community (perhaps a retired executive or former staff member).

Based on the committee's priorities, guests need to be identified and selected. Invitations should be sent from the office of the district superintendent. Guests need advance notice of three to four weeks.

Interview guests.
Once an individual has accepted an invitation to be a guest on the program, the guest can be asked to submit a list of 15-20 topic questions to be covered during the interview. Naturally, the host can forward questions to the guest for possible use during the program. Guests and the host must have a good idea of what is to be covered in advance.

The how-to of interviewing for the host will be covered in a meeting with the cable company's program director. The host will need to spend an hour or so with the director to learn the basics of what will go on during the show and how to handle a guest, charts, telephoned questions (if your format allows for audience phone calls) and similar matters.

The superintendent/host should keep a record of clothing worn during the interviews if he or she anticipates changing the wardrobe from show to show. It might be simpler to select one outfit and wear it for each program; this should be decided in concert with the program director.

Write opening and closing for shows.
The superintendent/host should memorize or read a formal introduction to the program that will precede all the actual interviews, and a stock closing for the program. A standard phrase should also be used for exiting to, and returning from, any public service announcements that are to be part of the program.

Decide on set location and design.
A school district may be wired to the local cable company. Such an arrangement allows the school maximum control over a variety of possible set designs depending upon the talent and resources of the school district. Production sets situated in a school building classroom will have the benefit of student and staff attention. Such attention can be within academic or supplemental course work in English and language arts, industrial arts, and/or fine arts classes.

If the district is not connected directly to the local cable company, the public access equipment and set at the local cable company can be used. In this case, set design flexibility and student and staff involvement will be determined in conversation with the program director.

Involve students and staff.
Students and teachers should be involved, whenever possible, in the production of the district program. Many schools now offer video production as part of the regular curriculum. These districts might profitably produce the district talk show as part of class requirements.

Depending upon the production capability of the district and the expertise of the staff and students, direct involvement of a class could include: scripting, taping and editing opening and closing sequences for the program; providing music and voice for the sequence material; producing public service announcements on issues of critical importance to both students and/or the district and generating video credits. In such situations, video production class student assessment can be real-world based and form part of a comprehensive graduation portfolio for those students involved.

Write a budget.

The program budget will depend upon the resources of the district and the cable company. If a district has allocated funds for the construction of a fully-equipped television studio, a talk show can be funded as part of the overall television studio educational program.

A district might have only minor television production equipment resources on hand, even if the district is wired to the cable company. If the district has no production equipment at all, the program should be produced at the local cable company television studio.

The great budget benefit to such an initiative is that cable companies are required (see McGowan, 1995) as part of franchise agreements, to provide free public, government, and education access to production equipment and air time using the cable company's designated channels.

The actual costs to a district should be minimal; preparation, handling and mailing of invitations; television calls to confirm guest dates and times; transportation of personnel to the cable station studio, if necessary; possible enhancements to the studio set (for example, plants or photographs of the district's schools); videotapes for production, particularly if the district desires to maintain master copies and duplicates for the school and local libraries; and the coordinator and superintendent's time in preparation and in taping or cablecasting the actual program.

Other costs might include videotape purchase and duplication to provide guests a complimentary copy of the program in which they participated, and follow-up thank you letter preparation and postage.

Cablecast the program.

If the program is taped and edited at the district studio, the cable company should be consulted in advance about all the technical details, including tape size, audio and video specifications, and so forth. The cable company program manager also should be consulted about the dates and times for cablecasting the district program to insure the widest possible audience.

Evaluate the program.

The district cable television program should be evaluated regularly. Not only should informal feedback be taken into consideration, but a formal evaluation instrument should be available to the viewers at stipulated intervals to solicit their comments and critique. The evaluation information should serve to guide long-term objectives of the show.

Conclusion

A television talk show can be an excellent means to take educational issues and concerns directly before the local tax-paying public. Not only can such a show enable the superintendent to communicate regularly with the various district audiences on items of concerns to all stakeholders, but it can be done at a small financial burden to the district.

A quality cable television program should generate a positive image for the school district. Such an image could lead to an increase in the number of volunteers working within the district, prompt additional school/business partnerships, result in an increase in donations of equipment and supplies to the schools, and favorably affect district-wide perceptions of the role of the school in the life of the community. By taking advantage of existing technology, an "electronic superintendent" can demonstrate leadership by using available resources to their fullest extent, and put into place an effective, efficient, low-cost vehicle for improving and enhancing school-community relations.

Reference: McGowan, A. S. "Reaching the Public Through Cable and Educational Television," *Phi Delta Kappan.* Vol. 77(2), 1995.

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by Albert E. Holliday

PR and School Community Relations
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association held its second Summer PR Academy in August. PenSPRA president Pat Jennette asked me to conduct a session, again, on the communication and student achievement topic. Attending a PenSPRA meeting, especially the academy, is a special activity for me as I was the chapter's first president (1969-70).

At the start of this session, I asked participants to write questions about issues and concerns they had about school-community relations topics. Unfortunately, I didn't have time to address those questions before participants had to go to the next session. Here then, are my responses to the questions, worded just as I received them.

Question 1.
What amount should be budgeted for PR in a district?

A. The traditional rule of thumb has been half of one percent of the yearly operating budget for a mid-sized district, somewhat less for large districts. For a district with a $20 million budget, about $100,000 could be appropriate for staff, publications, overhead, etc. The nature of a district's school-community relations program must relate to the needs and resources of the community. The tendency in too many districts is to underrate the value and significance of the district's obligations to provide information and promote relationships internally and externally and thus spend too little rather than too much.

If you have the job of starting a new communication program in a district, you may wish to research several districts of similar natures that have had successful communication programs for several years, and use their programs as models for yours.

Question 2.
What are the two or three major mistakes schools and boards make that undermine public confidence (in our schools)?

A. What most educators don't do contributes to less public confidence in schools than they deserve. Articles and research we have published in the *Journal of Educational Public Relations* justify these conclusions:

1. Educators (superintendents and principals mainly but teachers are included) are incredibly passive. Most appear to be unwilling or unable to initiate and maintain ongoing and frequent channels of communication with their major audiences. Administrators need to take the time to communicate. No one else, especially the media, can tell the school story as they can and should.
2. Administrators tend not to seek out people in their communities to sit on advisory committees, serve as volunteers or mentors, help form an educational foundation, join in partnerships, or otherwise be in positions to help schools and students. Scores of people in every community have skills and interests that can be put to use, and many businesspeople would be willing to join in partnerships. But they have to be asked. And the evidence is clear that the more personal contacts community members have in schools, the more likely they will view the schools positively.
3. Teachers, especially in the middle and upper grade levels, operate almost in isolation of their students' families. They do not contact parents to involve them on a regular basis. They also tend to operate in departmental isolation, seldom conferring with a student's other teachers. By and large, teachers are dedicated and do a fine job with students within their own classroom structure, but they appear to be unwilling

HARMONY STREET SCHOOL, BEAVER FALLS.

or unable to develop the kind of intra- and inter-structures allowing them to work in teams with colleagues and parents.

These "inactions" play into the hands of advocates of vouchers or choice plans or charter schools. You can be sure that these people are not passive.

Question 3.

Knowing certain issues may lie down the road, I'd like to begin discussion groups with community members to gain support for the district. How far in advance do I do this, and how do I do it so it doesn't come across as propaganda?

A. Starting discussion groups to gain support for a predetermined course of action, if that is what the question means, is an improper course of action. I can't think of any issue that would justify a closed-door approach to its solution. I would rather take these steps:

1. Write an overview of the pending problem — why it has developed, who is involved and what the possible solutions are.
2. Work with the board or superintendent — depending on what your operation requires — to form advisory/study committees, perhaps one at each school level. Ask 10-15 people to serve on a committee, and be sure they represent a cross-section of views and interests.
3. Hold committee meetings — once a week for a month or so — so members can consider the topic from a variety of angles.
4. Be sure that committee members choose their own discussion leader. This person should not be a school employee, to avoid any criticism that the committee was asked to be a rubberstamp for a district point of view.
5. Ask members to study the issue and then, when they have heard all points of view, to vote on recommendations they support.
6. A written report of their recommendations should be reviewed by the appropriate body — the board or superintendent. In turn, a statement of action taken should be provided to committee members within a month or so. This is an important factor — members of a study committee must see evidence that their suggestions were taken seriously. If not, they will resist future occasions to share their opinions.

Question 4.

Wouldn't a school system have more effective communication via an in-house PR program as opposed to an agency that serves a number of districts?

A. One can list pros and cons of either

approach — doing PR locally or having a consultant/manager work for several districts. But in either situation, only certain tasks can be done by the communication person. These can include community newsletters, news releases, resource guides and surveys. Other tasks must be done by principals and teachers and volunteers and part-time resource people and others in the school family. A communication program is never a one-person operation.

Question 5.

How do you determine ways to provide information the community needs to have to make good decisions regarding the schools?

A. That question is the basis for several fine textbooks in our field. The place to start is with the school system's statement of educational excellence goals. The goals should be specific in terms of the district's purposes, what students should learn when, and the methods that should be used to conduct the educational and related programs in schools.

The statement should be published for the community at least once a year — when the fall semester begins. It should serve as a basic reference — here is what we believe is necessary, now, how do we achieve these goals? You could form discussion groups with parents and business people and interested citizens. They will give you plenty of ideas and suggestions as to what they need to understand what schools are and are not doing and why.

Question 6.

What are some suggestions for developing successful PR programs in a small district?

A. You don't need to start a PR program from scratch. Your school boards association and the officers of your state's chapter of the National School Public Relations Association can give you names of communication specialists who have operations in a system of your size. The specialists will be pleased to assist, seldom at any cost, as most of them began themselves with the help of others in the field.

Question 7.

What are the best ways to physically bring community members without children into the schools so the schools can sell themselves?

A. The question has several dimensions. First, there are ways to draw people into schools.

FIFTH WARD SCHOOLS, ALLENTOWN.

Examples are: inviting them to the school for a free or reduced-price lunch, asking people to be volunteers or guest speakers, asking them to serve on advisory or resource or planning committees, asking them to be mentors or tutors, inviting them to be judges for a student contest, allowing them to enroll in certain classes.

Second, "schools" can be taken to people, to the community. Examples are student displays/exhibits in a shopping center or retirement homes or a library; students who agree to provide community services, say to assist older people with certain tasks; students who serve as interns in local businesses; student tours of neighborhoods and factories; and partnerships in which adults work with students and staff in the community.

Ask the question: Where can students learn or profit outside of the classroom? Those places will probably be around community members, who may also profit from the experience.

Teachers' roles in school-community relations should be written in detail in the board-association contract.

Question 8.

What specific strategies will involve teachers in feeling like they need to be part of the PR team?

A. The question needs to be analyzed. What do you mean by reference to the "PR team"? The term is not used with clarity in the research.

The jobs of teachers are usually specified in detail in a job description and through provisions of a board-union/association contract. I agree that teachers have or should have vital roles in school PR and school-community relations. However, these roles must be written as integral parts of these documents that govern the school district/employer and teacher/employee relationship. For example, how teachers maintain regular contact with parents; what they must do to support a partnership; their roles in parent-teacher meetings beyond in-school conferences (such as home visits); their participation in planning in-service workshops, in-school issue studies, peer conferences and liasion; their roles in working with adult volunteers, mentors and tutors — all these are worthwhile and specific strategies and must be covered in the employment contract. The contract should also cite means for necessary time and resources to carry them out. Often, administrators have told me that "we would like our teachers to be more aware of public relations and do more to promote the schools" as if what teachers could do in these areas is easy or convenient or something they can do in their spare time. That is not the case. The lack of a sophisticated approach to the role of teachers in PR is probably because the overall district approach to PR is also unsophisticated.

Question 9.

How do we communicate to the 70% of the population who no longer have children in our schools? How do we tell them the school's needs if we are to continue to improve?

A. The only ways are to either persuade people to see for themselves (see question 7) or to go into people's homes via the mail, television or radio and the phone. For example:

Mail: Newsletters written from the reader's point of view, surveys to learn the reader's point of view, statements of the board that detail accomplishments and needs of the system.

Television or radio: Programs that show or discuss school operations, call-in programs, programs involving students and staff members demonstrating how-tos such as doing tax preparation, planning a trip, cooking, exercises, etc.

Telephone: Short polls to learn what opinions people have and what questions or concerns they have about schools; invitations for them to go to a free lunch or lecture or show or exhibit put on by the students and staff.

Question 10.

How can we best collect, organize and promote data that demonstrates student achievement?

A. This questions deals with a vital area — demonstration of competence of educators as illustrated by the achievement of students. At present, most of the information in these areas appears to be mostly restricted to students individually and parents via report cards.

The staffs at the central office and at schools should make recognition of student achievement a priority matter throughout the year. Means to this end include:

- Publish a monthly newsletter to all residents, with ample coverage of individual and group accomplishments of students and their teachers/staff.
- Publish monthly newsletters from each school — including the high school — to parents and key communicators in each school area.
- Issue numerous releases and feature stories to local newspapers.
- Invite service clubs to ask their membership to sponsor two or three awards each year in areas of priority to the service club. Awards to be given at a club meeting.
- Invite retail businesses to sponsor various contests and competitions, with photos of winners featured in ads of businesses.
- Publish test scores, highlighting progress one year to the next, in newsletters and send the information to local organizations/businesses for their editors to include in their own newsletters.
- Arrange for sponsorship, by a local television station, of an achievement awards program, honoring 10 or a dozen students and teachers each year. Tape the program and make copies available in schools.
- Develop a special channel on the local television cable network for programs produced for and by school personnel and students.
- Conduct a special awards-recognition segment at the start of each school board meeting and invite awardees and their families to attend. Promote news media coverage of top or extra special awards.
- Issue short items that the editor of the local governmental agency (city, borough, township, etc.) can use as filler items.
- Ask prominent citizens to serve on a blue-ribbon committee, to select eight or 10 people (students and staff and volunteers) for special recognition and public appreciation of their accomplishments or efforts on behalf of educational and community life. Do this every two or three years.
- Form a brainstorming committee, to review this list of suggestions and come up with a dozen more ideas that apply to your community's unique nature.

Question 11.

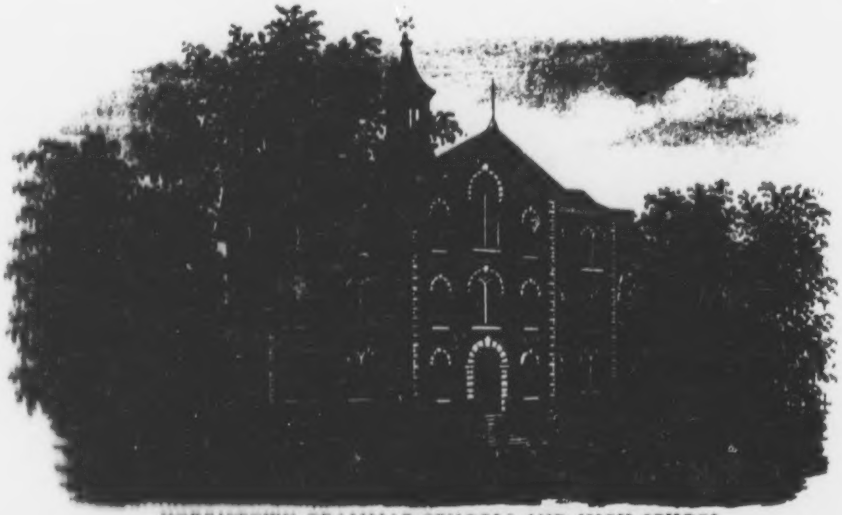
Who is my client — the superintendent, the system, teachers or students?

A. (The person asking this question was recently assigned to duties as school public relations officer of a district.)

In the short run, the superintendent is the main client, as your immediate supervisor and the person responsible to the board for your actions. Make this person dissatisfied and you will accomplish nothing.

In the long run, students are the client of both you and every other employee.

I prefer to use the term "audience" instead of client. There are about 10 separate groups of people — audiences — that your communication program must encompass. Some will require your individual ongoing attention — key communicators, a reporter that covers your district, an administrator who wants assistance. Other audiences need certain information and direction from a staff person such as a principal or chair of a committee or a teacher/department head or the mentor coordinator, and you



NORRISTOWN GRAMMAR SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOL.

will serve as a consultant to these people as they plan to meet their communication/involvement responsibilities.

There is a pecking order in each community and organization — people who are most important, those who only think they are most important, those who are behind the scenes but wield the most power, those who deserve your support and those that you must support to accomplish other things, people who will use you for their own ends, and those whose intentions are always honorable. You will encounter this range of people in schools, the central office and the community. For some, their job or social role is their priority. For most, students are the focal point. It won't take too long to sort out who is who.

Question 12.

What is the best job title for people who conduct such a program?

A. The term "public relations" appears to be losing favor, while a term using the words "community relations" or "communications" have gained favor.

A review of a recent NSPRA directory showed that — in Washington, Pennsylvania and Missouri — public relations was in the job title of 19 people, public information in 25, and community relations or communications in 64.

The difficulty with the public relations title is that its function in education is quite different than in business and industry in which profit and market share (competition) are overriding factors. In my view public information is too passive. I prefer school-community relations as it has application to the relationships of people both in schools and the community.

Answers — Speakers' No-fear Checklist (back cover):

End, negotiate, treat, have, understand, say, identify, acknowledge, stand, take, initiate, care, create, open, never, forget, internalize, decide, encourage, navigate, control, engage.

by David L. Martinson

Confront Censorship Crusades With Genuine School-Community Relations

Alarm bells have been ringing in some quarters of late suggesting that "censorship is making a menacing comeback in our public schools...because many people are finding it a legitimate way of promoting their individual outlooks on crucial issues."[1]

The Miami Herald, in fact, warns that "a post-cold war syndrome called 'moral authoritarianism' is on the move in America, and it's now preying on our public schools in the form of censorship."[2]

Attempts at censorship within the confines of the public school system, of course, are not new:

> For as long as there have been public schools in America, people have objected to books and courses that they deem improper or inappropriate for the young. But at no prior time in the history of this nation have so many individuals and organizations focused attention on the schools, what they teach, and how they teach.[3]

There has been no shortage of advice on how schools should respond to this challenge—some of it coming in the form of thoughtfully conceived counsel, other in near hysterical diatribes warning of "doom and gloom" in apocalyptic proportions. In this article I attempt to approach the dilemma from a formal public relations perspective, building upon previous research that I and others have published.

Much More Than Publicity

From the outset, note that the focus of this article is on "genuine" public relations. Too much of what passes for public relations, in the eyes of many school administrators, is nothing more "than writing a news release to publicize the latest good news about the school debate team." In fact, I previously authored an article in this Journal that was aptly titled: "School Public Relations: Do It Right Or Don't Do It At All!"[5]
In that article I argued that:

> Far too many persons—not just school administrators—mistakenly perceive public relations as synonymous with publicity.... Too often, an effort to generate good publicity is seen as an antidote for a serious malignancy when the only genuine cure involves direct surgical intervention![6]

School administrators need to understand that a genuine school public relations program is not a tool to manipulate and manufacture favorable images. Instead it should be viewed, as public relations scholar Jim Grunig suggests, as a process of managing communication between the school [school system] and its publics.[7] In fact, one might paraphrase Grunig and argue that school public relations will not be successful until administrators view its [public relations] purpose as one of developing mutual understanding between the school and its publics—not as an effort to persuade those relevant publics that the schools are free of problems and that administrators never make mistakes![8]

Communication between the school(s) and its publics should be viewed as a transaction—a sharing of information rather than an effort a "naked persuasion." Chaffee and Petrick make a similar point when they argue that "telling" is not an effective means of

communication. They contend that:

> effective communication is... realistically viewed as a situation in which two persons or groups are able to clear up misconceptions and ambiguities. In order to achieve that sort of success, each party to communication has to co-orient with the other, which as a practical matter usually requires that each party seek information as well as give it.[8]

Consequently, public relations—as defined in this article and in much of the evolving professional literature—involves a process of continuous research in which an effort is made to understand and communicate with relevant publics in such a way that something approaching mutual understanding is reached. The school public relations practitioner is not so much interested in persuading as in achieving genuine co-orientation between the school (school system/district) and all of its publics. If persuasion occurs, the public should be just as likely to persuade...(the school administration) to change attitudes or behavior as the...(administration) is likely to change the publics' attitudes or behavior. Ideally, both...will change somewhat after a public relations effort.[10]

If one is not able to accept this more enlightened—and effective—way of practicing school public relations, it is probably best that the reader continue no further. This is because everything that follows is based on an assumption that schools can best confront censorship challenges by implementing a genuine public relations program—not one aimed at creating an image of the school administration as an omnipotent and infallible proclaimer of educational wisdom to a community in need of its paternalistic guidance.

The Importance of Continuous Research

It is perhaps impossible to overemphasize the importance of research in any genuine public relations effort. In fact, "research is critical at every step of public relations work."[11] It has been argued, for example, that public relations practitioners can't manage what they can't measure.[12] Cutlip and Center, two of the giants in the development of contemporary public relations (joined later by Broom), contend that "methodical, systematic research is the foundation of effective public relations."[13]

This means that before anyone associated with a school public relations program even considers communicating to a particular public—i.e., sending out a news release to the media regarding a controversial issue or developing a communication strategy for responding to a particular interest group—research should have been done that provides some assurance that the communication effort is correctly constructed. A well-researched communication effort to deal with controversial situations and dilemmas will likely be more effective because it will be:

> ...supported by evidence and theory. In this context, research is the systematic gathering of information for the purpose of describing and understanding situations, and checking out assumptions about publics and public relations consequences....Its main purpose is to reduce uncertainty in decision-making.[14]

It needs to be re-emphasized—again and again—that this research must begin with an effort to "learn...about and describe relevant...publics, including their demographics (social and economic status) and psychographics (personality traits)."[15]

School public relations persons must know who makes up their various publics and how individuals within those publics perceive issues related to the education process and school system. This means "effective communication starts with listening, which requires openness and systematic effort."[16] Those concerned about school public relations need to appreciate that:

> Failure to listen often leads to purposeless "communications" on issues that do not exist to publics that are not there. Unless you know the orientations, pre-dispositions, and language of your audience—learned through empathetic listening—you are not likely to communicate effectively. Research is simply one method of structuring systematic "listening" into the communication process.[17]

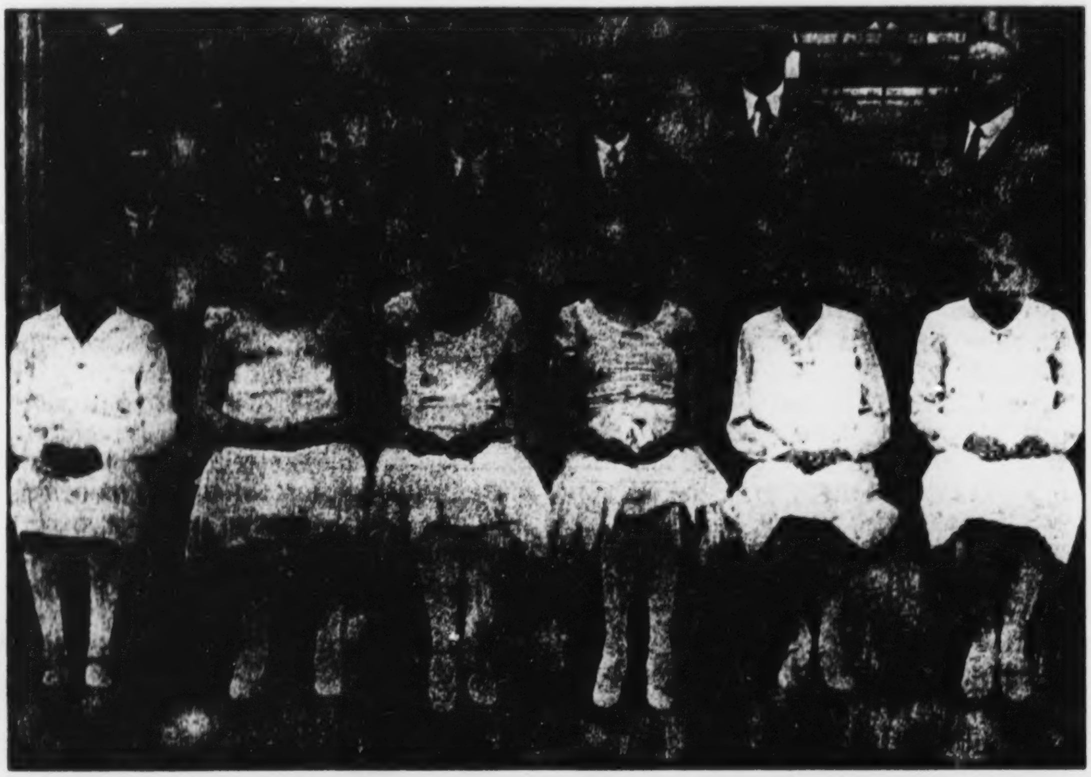
Clearly censorship efforts by particular individuals and/or groups should not catch school administrators unprepared if they—and their staff—have been doing their public relations "homework." That does not, however, appear to always be the case. Jenkinson states that "it is not uncommon for school personnel to be offguard when they first learn about a problem in the letters to the editor column...(or when) local radio call-in shows become the vehicle for protest."[18] He notes that "at least 20 administrators have told me that they first heard about one protest as a result of a door-to-door campaign that stirred a community to action."[19] Obviously no one is those school districts was doing basic public relations research!

Dealing with Censorship Challenges

- **Don't be quick to label questions as criticisms.**

Those having responsibility for school public relations must unequivocally acknowledge and support the right of parents and other concerned citizens "to be concerned about what...children read and study in school."[20] They also need to recognize "that the majority of attempts to censor books are made by people who are sincere in their desire to do what they feel is best for students."[21] While one might not agree with either the means or ends of such censorship efforts, it does little good to attempt to "demonize" anyone and everyone who may express concerns in this regard.

Furthermore, placing all those who express such concerns into one monolithic grouping may produce a crisis where none exists. Such apparently was the case involving "a parent...(who) only wanted to ask a



few questions about a textbook her child was studying."[22] It became a case study in how not to react:

When she was treated unprofessionally by a teacher, the parent decided to complete the school system's complaint form, presented it to the appropriate school authorities, and requested that the school board remove the books even though she had originally had no intention of doing so. The board honored her request.[23]

- Anticipate Problems

A genuine school public relations program will be structured to anticipate problems of the sort engendered by individuals and groups who may pose censorship challenges. In fact, Cutlip, Center and Broom hold that "protecting school boards and teachers from the constraints of political and religious censorship is a prime task for the school practitioner."[24] Good public relations research is the key to avoiding being caught "off-guard." Further, there must be a plan in place that will allow for an appropriate response to those raising objections to particular materials. Layne, for instance, argues "that the best defense is a strong offense, and this is certainly true when the issue of censorship arises."[25]

This means that, besides understanding the school community and being aware of where and from whom calls for censorship may arise, a positive plan of action must also be in place. It has, for example, been suggested that "teachers should consider working with colleagues to develop a presentation on intellectual/academic freedom...(and that) local community groups should be solicited to work with school people in building a coalition of support."

There is a need for "building both understanding and support for...(intellectual/academic freedom) before challenges ever occur."[27]

- Find ways to talk amicably, face to face

The importance of public relations as a process of continuous dialogue and striving to attain the before mentioned mutual understanding with all impacted publics needs to be underscored. Jenkinson reports that "teachers and administrators throughout the country have told me that disputes over books and courses can frequently be settled amicably when both sides sit down and talk calmly."[28] Layne makes much the same point when he states, "Many times parents' fears can be put to rest if they understand the purpose for using a specific book."[29]

> *Good public relations is not always telling a particular public that which it wants to hear.*

One must emphasize, however, that striving to achieve mutual understanding should/must not be viewed as the moral equivalent of "selling out!" Just because a small group—of even a very large one—believes itself justified in its efforts to censor particular materials does not mean the school(s) should acquiesce. Good public relations must not be equated with always telling a particular public that which it wants to hear!

Supporting "the right to complain...(must) not guarantee...(a right of) removal of materials."[30] Genuine school public relations will require telling people that sometimes the school will not—because it cannot—accommodate their demands:

> Able school executives realize that they must often go against popular opinion to serve the best interest of pupils, and if the decisions are for the welfare of the children. Those decisions will be the right ones over the long pull. But the public must be persuaded that they are the right decisions.[31]

School public relations must be designed to convince those who feel the need to censor particular materials that most censorship is not in the best interests of any of the parties involved. Would-be censors must understand that any immediate "gains" realized by most censorship efforts are only transitory, that in the long run the individual and community interest will best be served by protecting the right of persons and groups—even those with whom one may vehemently disagree—to freely communicate and receive information and ideas.

It was just this point that Supreme Court Justice William Brennan made in his opinion for the Court in the 1989 case *Texas v. Johnson* (the case involving burning the American flag as a means of political protest):

> The way to preserve the flag's special role is not to punish those who feel differently about these matters. It is to persuade them that they are wrong....We do not consecrate the flag by punishing its desecration, for in doing so we dilute the freedom that this cherished emblem represents.

Conclusions

Communication scholars DeFleur and Dennis note that "almost all Americans will nod vigorously if asked whether they believe in freedom of the press."[32] They are quick to add, however—and rightly so—that "when pressed concerning some specific case...(this) enthusiasm...is likely to vanish."[33] The same is true regarding school censorship. Too many people who say they are opposed to censorship fail to support that rhetoric when it comes down to concrete action. Our public schools must acknowledge this reality and be prepared to respond to it. As this article makes clear, I believe a genuine public relations effort can play a significant role in assisting officials and staff in a school or school system in responding to that challenge. Again, however, the problem centers around the fact that public relations is so widely misunderstood—misunderstanding that extends to those charged with administering our public schools.

School administrators must appreciate "that some of the most important messages communicated by public relations...are aimed neither at the media...nor the general public...(but rather)...are developed with...(school administration objectives) in mind and deal with fundamental aspects of organizational direction, decision making, and coordination."[34] Even more to the point, "the duties of public relations practitioners go far beyond the skills of communicating, because effective communication requires planning and implementing organizational objectives...(public relations must assist) in influencing policy decisions and developing strategies to implement them."[35]

If school administrators view public relations as a "simply" a tool for writing press releases in response to a crisis—such as one involving school censorship—only after the crisis has erupted, than school administrators seriously fail to perceive the central value and objective of a genuine school public relations program!

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by The Council for Basic Education

HOW DOES YOUR SCHOOL MEASURE UP?

The Council for Basic Education has published a checklist that parents, and citizens generally, can use to determine if their schools "assure a quality education."

The checklist contains nearly 100 questions, in eight categories (academics, technology, staff, community, leadership, assessment of program and student progress and climate). The nature of the questions would probably require a team of people to research answers and prepare a report about a school or school system.

The CBE checklist was produced with a grant from the SBC Foundation.

Emphasis on High Academic Standards in the Basic Subjects

Does the school have high expectations for all students? What are they? Do the students know what the standards for them are?

Do you feel the school sufficiently emphasizes the basic subjects (English, history, government, geography, mathematics, the sciences, foreign languages, and the arts)?

What do the school staff and teachers know about standards for students nationally?

What does the school expect students to know by the end of the 4th, 8th, and 12 grades in the basic subjects?

What classes are available in the fine and performing arts and foreign languages? W What percentage of students take these classes? For how many years?

Does the school environment show evidence that it values student work, creativity?

How does the school determine that students are academically ready for promotion to the next grade?

For middle or high schools:

Is the school's curriculum related to the work students did at the previous level?

For high schools:

What Advanced Placement classes are available?

What is the percentage and demographic breakdown of students in AP/gifted classes?

What percentage of AP students actually take the exams? What is the history of the students' scores on the AP exams?

What percentage of students take advanced mathematics classes beyond algebra?

Technology

How much and what kind of technology does the school have to support its teachers, students, and staff?

Does the school have a long-term plan for

implementing technology into students' and teachers' work?

What evidence is there that teachers are comfortable with and knowledgeable about the technology they use?

In what ways do the teachers use technology to enhance students' learning? Is technology used merely as a substitute for textbooks, or to provide new opportunities for learning?

School's Values and Expectations for Staff

What kinds of professional development do the school's teachers engage in on their own?

What does the school provide? Is there an emphasis on teachers' intellectual development and on pedagogical skills?

What evidence does the school have that its teachers are well qualified to teach the subject and grade level(s) to which they

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are assigned?

What evidence is there that teachers are supportive of and cooperative with one another?

To what degree do teachers from different departments have contact with one another?

What kind of mentoring is arranged for less experienced teachers? How is the mentoring evaluated?

Is there evidence that teachers do more than leave "on the clock"?

Role of Parents and Local Community

What opportunities do parents, students and members of the local community have to participate in school governance? What is the evidence of their actual involvement?

How much contact with parents are the teachers expected to have (besides for problems)?

By what means? How does the school know whether it happens?

What role does the parent play in disciplinary decisions?

What involvement do the students have with the community outside the school?

How does the school keep parents and the local community informed about what happens in the school community?

What percentage of the school's parents are involved in the school on a daily basis? At all? What are typical parental roles in the school?

> *A school needs to have a clear mission that is supported by the staff and communicated to students and parents.*

Leadership and Vision

Does the school have a mission, a philosophy of education? Is it clearly communicated to students and parents? How does the school know whether all staff members support it?

How much time does the principal spend in the school's classrooms? In my child's classroom?

What evidence is there that the principal exercises academic leadership?

What personal efforts does the principal undertake to improve academically and professionally?

How does the principal encourage and support professional development for teachers? Do the teachers feel that the time and training provided are adequate?

How does the principal link professional

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development to the needs of the teachers and the academic standards for students?

How much authority does the school have to implement its vision and goals? To what degree does it control its funds?

Assessment of Academic Program

What books do the students read as part of their school work?

How do teachers coordinate curriculum from grade to grade? How do they coordinate curriculum among subjects in each grade level?

How do teachers accommodate differing learning styles and rates of learning in students?

What are the school's grouping policies for students? How easily can students move between groups?

How is placement in special programs determined? Do students and parents have a voice in the process?

What percentage of students are in special education? What is the socio-economic/ethnic breakdown of the special education students?

Does the school include the scores of its special education students when it reports achievement results, or does it separate them out to improve total school scores?

Are all students expected to meet the same high academic standards?

What is the quality of the school's library/media center? How much and for what purposes is it used?

What is the age and quality of the resources (e.g. texts, equipment) for students and teachers?

Do textbooks determine curriculum, or do teachers?

What are the requirements for graduation?

Does the school adhere to traditional uses and division of time, or is there evidence of flexibility to better serve students and teachers?

Are summer enrichment programs available? Are students expected to read in the summer?

Assessment of Student Progress

What percentage of students take either the SAT or the ACT? What is the school's history of student scores on those tests?
If the students take state assessments, how do they do?

What kind of information do teachers use to evaluate students' learning?

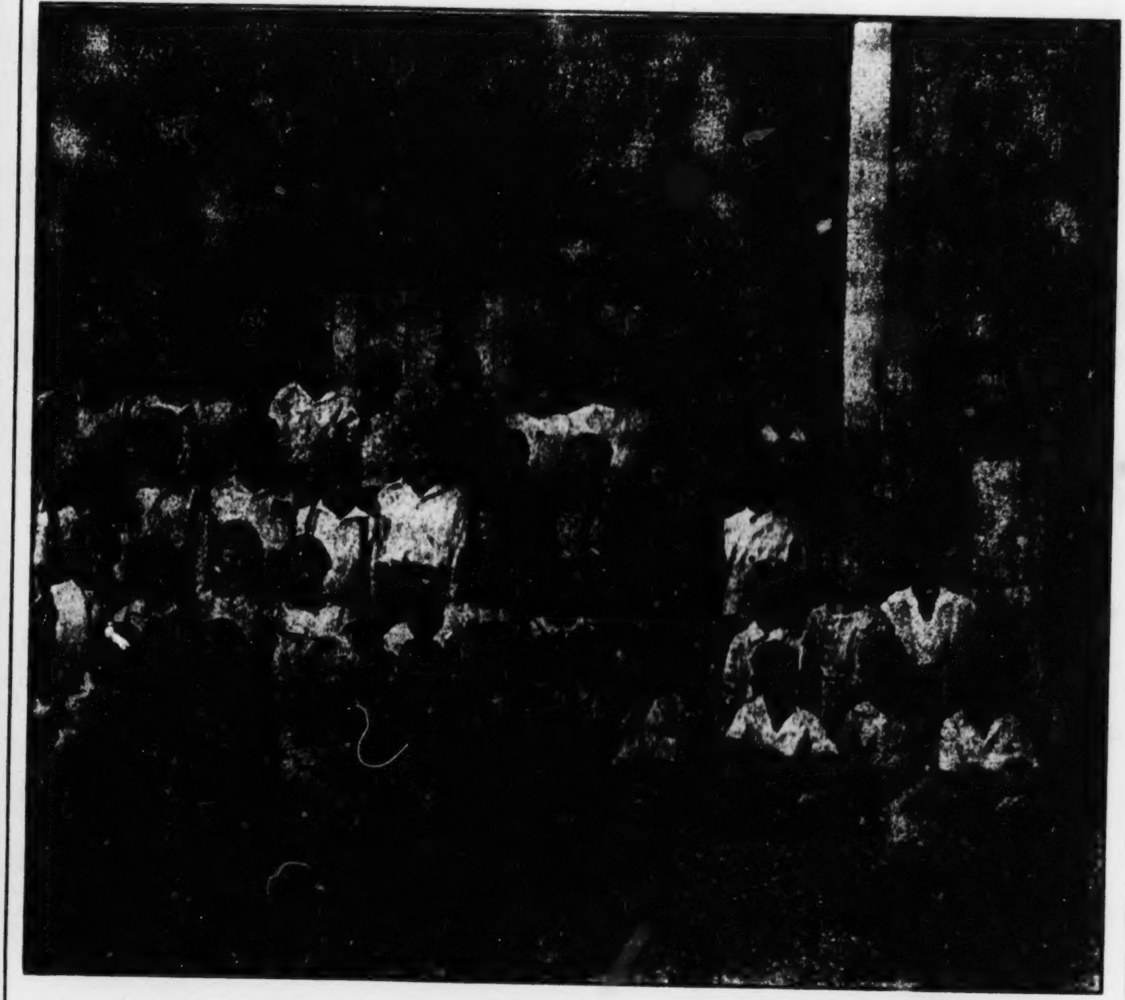
What kind of information is reported to parents? Does it adequately and accurately convey students' progress and achievement?

What percentage of students go on to post-secondary education? Where do they go?

Climate and School Community

What evidence is there of a sense of community in the school?

How is an expectation of orderliness and respect conveyed?



Are the building and its grounds well maintained?

How does the school make decisions on disciplinary matters?

What is the school's policy on violent or disruptive students? Are students aware of the policy, and do they think it is followed and fair?

Do students, teachers, and other parents consider the school a safe place?

The Council for Basic Education promotes a curriculum "strong in the basics — English, history, geography, math, sciences, foreign languages, and the arts — for all children in the nation's elementary and secondary schools." CBE published a monthly periodical and a quarterly publication. For membership information, write the CBE at 1319 "F" Street, NW, Washington, DC 20004-1152.

25

by Albert E. Holliday

HOW DO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS MEASURE UP?

Whether or not your citizenry believes your schools measure up (see the previous article) probably depends on how well your school-community relations program has:

- Informed all of your audiences.
- Involved them, as may be appropriate.
- Sought their opinions or asked them to participate in decision-making.
- Provided them with opportunities to be of service to schools, in small or large measure.

A Checklist for Boards and Administrators to measure their school-community relations effectiveness:

Audience	Adequately Informed	Opinions Sought	Service Opportunities	Participate in Decisions	Additional Factor	
1. Parents	____	____	____	____	Personal contacts, staff	____
2. Non-Parents	____	____	____	____	Services provided to them	____
3. Senior Citizens	____	____	____	____	Services provided to them	____
4. Business Owners/ Managers	____	____	____	____	Personal contacts, staff	____
5. Students	____	____	____	____	Achievement Recognized	____
6. Staff members	____	____	____	____	Achievement Recognized	____
7. Alumni	____	____	____	____	Solicit feedback	____
8. Realtors	____	____	____	____	Meet with and provide materials	____
9. Influentials	____	____	____	____	Identified and known by school leadership	____
10. Special audience	____	____	____	____	____	

How to score the checklist:

A. A group of administrators and/or board members reviews each of the five items for the 10 major audiences. For each checked item, indicating that the activity or process occurs, score one point —maximum, 50 points.

B. A school representative then asks a group of people in each audience category if the school staff provides for the five activities or processes as indicates. Tally each of the 10 groups, one point per item—maximum, 50 points.

C. Compare the two checklists. Note those areas where disagreement is evident as to what the school people believe is taking place as compared with what the audience believes is taking place.

D. The ideal situation will be when the school and audience groups develop a consensus as to a desired level of school-community relations, and how that can be achieved.

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by Americans United for Separation of Church and State

PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHERS; MYTH VS. FACT

A POINT OF VIEW OF THE AUSCS

Promoters of "educational choice" make many assertions about the positive effects of private school vouchers on America's educational system. Are these claims true? What would vouchers really do? Let's examine some of the common myths about vouchers and review the facts.

MYTH: Vouchers are a constitutional way to assist parochial and other private schools.
FACT: Private sectarian schools account for 85 percent of the total private school enrollment in the United States. These religiously affiliated institutions generally pervade their entire curriculum with religious dogma, indoctrinating students on controversial subjects such as abortion, creationism and the role of women in society. Because of the U.S. Constitution's church-state separation provisions, government may not subsidize sectarian education. Federal courts have repeatedly struck down various schemes designed to funnel tax dollars into religious schools.

Many states have even stricter constitutional provisions that forbid the appropriation of public funds — direct or indirect — for religious purposes. Recently, the Puerto Rico Supreme Court struck down a program that provided vouchers for tuition at religious schools, even though the law also provided funds for public school choice. **No federal or state court has ever upheld using vouchers for private religious schools.**

MYTH: The people support vouchers and other forms of aid to parochial and other private schools.
FACT: Voters in 18 states and the District of Columbia have rejected various forms of parochial school aid in ballot referenda. Most recently, California voters in 1993 trounced a voucher initiative 70 percent to 30 percent. Only one state — Wisconsin — has implemented a voucher plan, an experimental program in Milwaukee limited to nonsectarian private schools. It has been very controversial and resulted in a drawn-out court battle. The driving forces behind vouchers are not parents, but sectarian school lobbies and political fringe groups such as the Libertarian Party.

MYTH: Vouchers will ensure "parental choice" in education.
FACT: When it comes to private schools, the concept of parental choice is meaningless. Private school administrators have the only real choice concerning which children are admitted to the schools and which are not. They may reject virtually anyone applying to attend or to teach in private schools. No voucher plan will change this fact.

MYTH: Vouchers will make public schools better by promoting competition in education.
FACT: There is simply no evidence to support this assertion. Competition may be fine for breakfast cereals, but it could be disastrous for schools. Public and private schools don't compete on an even playing field. Public schools

must accept all children regardless of academic ability, physical handicap or family background. Private schools may reject any child with problems and enroll only the academically gifted. Public schools will improve only if our government officials and the public decide to make a serious commitment to educational quality. Diverting money away from public schools to private schools will not achieve this goal, but will hurt the nation's public education system.

MYTH: The American public school system is failing our children.
FACT: New studies indicate that American students are among the best educated in the world. The U.S. has one of the highest graduation rates and U.S. schools steer more students to college than does any other country, even though many of those countries weed out mediocre students. In many measures of academic achievement, the status of U.S. students — with the majority educated in public school — continues to rise. Polls show that the vast majority of parents support the public schools their children attend and believe those schools are doing a good job. Vouchers will impede the public school system by draining the funding necessary to provide quality education for all children.

MYTH: Private schools provide a better education than public schools.
FACT: According to a recent *Money* magazine study, private schools rank no better scholastically than comparable public schools. In essence, the best private schools are no better than the best public schools, and the average private school is no better than average public school.

MYTH: Vouchers can be limited to certain private schools.
FACT: Courts have ruled consistently that the government may not play favorites among religious or classes of people. Attempts to limit vouchers to traditional parochial schools would only raise an equal protection claim of religious discrimination. Therefore, if enacted, voucher subsidies would be available to anyone sending a child to any private school, even those run by unusual or radical groups with theologies or political views that most Americans may find distasteful.

MYTH: Vouchers will correct the injustice of "double taxation" for private school parents, who must pay to support a public school system they don't use.
FACT: "Double taxation" does not exist. Private school tuition is not a tax; it is an additional expense some parents have chosen to pay. All members of society are expected to support certain basic public services such as the police and fire departments, libraries, and the public schools, whether they use them or not. (Childless couples and single people, for instance, must still pay school taxes.) We all have a vested interest in maintaining a strong public school system to make certain that our people are educated. Under a voucher plan, all taxpayers *will* face double taxation. They will have to pay for public schools, then pay increased taxes to make up for funds being channeled to parochial and other private schools.

MYTH: A voucher plan would empower poor families.
FACT: Private schools often charge high tuition. Since vouchers usually will not cover the full cost of tuition, the wealthy, who can already afford to pay private school tuition, will benefit the most. Low and middle-income families, who will not be able to afford the difference between the voucher and tuition costs, will be less likely to benefit. Even if poor families could come up with the full tuition

amount, few private schools are located in the nation's inner cities or other economically depressed areas. Fewer still are likely to admit children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Public schools remain the only reliable educational resource for all American children.

MYTH: Private schools would be able to maintain their independence while benefitting from a voucher program.
FACT: As a general rule, the government regulates what it subsidizes. If the government underwrites private schools financially, it has a right and a responsibility to ensure that the funds are being spent for sound educational services. Greater government scrutiny of private education will be necessary. Vouchers open the door to extensive state regulation of private schools.

Americans voluntarily support a wide variety of religious institutions and schools. They should not be forced to pay taxes for schools that teach religious views they disagree with. Vouchers are merely the first step toward full state funding of religious schools.

SCHOOL SOUVENIR.

Credit: This is a report of the **Americans United for Separation of Church and State,** (1816 Jefferson Place, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. (202) 466-3234).

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Case Study

A Smitten Principal's Crimson Letter Leads to a Harassment Suit and an Official Suspension

by Philip T. West

Crimson "Red" Lattimer was the best principal in the Saybody School System. Everybody in his environs believed that — his faculty, staff, students and their parents, peers, and even his boss, Ted Duncan, Saybody"s superintendent. A freckle-faced Massachusetts farm youth, smart as a whip and energetic as a fireworks display, Lattimer had finished college in three years instead of the typical four. The second youngest son, he was the only one of 10 siblings to receive a college degree. A teacher for seven years and an elementary school principal for eight, he held a doctorate completed during a sabbatical taken the year following his seventh year of teaching.

The name on the chunk of polished mahogany laying on his desk read Dr. C. Lattimer. He had no middle name, and only his closest friends knew what the C meant. His mother had named him Crimson after the movie, *The Crimson Pirate*, in which her favorite movie star, Burt Lancaster, had the starring role. To this day, he had never forgotten his mother for the moniker she had given him, even when she started calling him by the nickname of "Red." He had endured a great deal of kidding from his elementary classmates, and as a consequence, he had made few friends among his peers. But he had dazzled his teachers with his insatiable zest for learning. While other kids played, he studied.

In high school, he was labeled a nerd by many of his jealous classmates as he just devoured the school library, knew more about subjects than many of his teachers, and frequently embarrassed his parents with his superior knowledge when conversing with him. He graduated with honors and as the designated class valedictorian. But he fudged his role, feigning illness because of his exceeding shyness. Even now as a principal, he tried to keep aloof of people, afraid that they might not take him seriously and laugh at something he said. But this reticence didn't keep members of the school family from liking him. They hardly noticed it. What they saw was a person who was ready to go to bat for them, a person who spent long hours at the school burning the candle at both ends, a person who never had an unfavorable word for anybody.

Lattimer's mother was forever pestering her son to marry, taking advantage of their housing arrangement. She had moved in with Red a few years ago when her husband died. He would listen with the patience of Job to her criticisms until his lack of bedtime. He sometimes wondered how she would really feel if he became serious with a woman. If he ever did marry (an extremely unlikely event), his wife might not take well to the woman who now ruled the roost, who was unbearably bossy at times. Progeny was no reason to marry either; his mother now had grandchildren numbering in the 20s. He was the only unmarried sibling in the family.

But love did come to Lattimer like a hurricane in the Atlantic coming ashore in full force and it swept him off his feet. He was on vacation when his Juliet joined the school staff. Her name was Mary O'Day, and she was beautiful. Almost his height, 5' 10" certainly, with hair as red as his and worn long to her shoulders. She had a milky white complexion and that thrilled him.

He met her during the two days of inservice preceding the opening of school. While he was smitten, it was love at first sight; she, on the other hand, saw him only as her new principal. True, she was flattered by the attention he gave her, but since she was not unaccustomed to male interest, she took it in her stride, smiled a bit, and strode off.

When Lattimer returned to his office, he pulled O'Day's personnel file where he read that she was 24 years old, had no previous teaching experience, and possessed a bachelor and master's degree from an ivy league university in the West. Her home state was Michigan and her recommendations ranged from average to outstanding. One of her professors had written, after a string of mellifluous adjectives, "She has few equals in effort and intelligence, and her social skills are exceedingly well developed. The children will love her. I recommend her without reservation."

Lattimer haunted the hallways once school began, much to everyone's surprise. This was not our everyday Lattimer, one teacher remarked, "The man has been overhauled. If he smiles again today, his face is going to crack. And his arm will have to be put in a sling if he doesn't stop shaking hands. What's come over him?"

Although Lattimer seemed to be visiting all the classrooms, it soon became obvious that the first grade class of Ms. O'Day held his interest. His intense attention made her feel like a debutante again, especially since two third-year teachers, both macho types, were trying to date her also.

On Halloween eve, Lattimer asked Mary O'Day for a date. "Trick or treat," he said, as her students wended their way to the front of the building to board their buses.

Laughingly she responded with, "Whose treat?"

"Mine," he answered blushing. "If you haven't made any plans for this evening, I would like to take you to dinner. Toss in a little history of the place, too, since you're new here. After all, the witches once flew their broomsticks nightly around here. Still do, some people say."

"Where can we find a broomstick? I'm just dying to fly tonight." She laughed again.

After that Halloween evening, they had several dates together, but instead of drawing them closer, those engagements only seemed to pull them farther apart. He had attempted only one small intimacy, an awkward kiss he once stole that landed on the edge of her left ear when he stumbled into her and banged her head against the door of her apartment. He apologized excessively, but that did nothing for the bump and headache she had the next day. When he asked her for another date, she coyly refused him. By then she was seeing someone else, one of the teachers who had been pursuing her earlier.

But Lattimer was determined by now. He deluged her with flowers and candy, calling her constantly at home so often that she bought an answering machine to screen his calls.

He became a pest, frequenting her classroom half the day. Because she was newly hired, and didn't want to draw unfavorable administrative attention, she tried to shut Lattimer out of her mind even when he was in full view. In time though, the overt giggling of her co-workers became so acute that she could stand the embarrassment no more. She confronted Lattimer one afternoon in full view of her fellow teachers and warned him that she would tolerate his behavior no longer, even if he was the principal.

Her statement was like a knife in his heart. In pain, he retreated to his office and she assumed victory. But fear of repercussions was not the reason he had retreated. It was because the thought of losing her terrified him. He had to be alone to think.

A couple of weeks later on entering the

building, O'Day happened to smile at Lattimer, who was standing supervising debarkation of the buses. He took this colleague gesture as an encouragement and ventured down the corridor to her classroom after school had started. He was just about ready to come into her classroom when she spotted him.

Hastily, she headed for the door to block his entry; then joined him in the hallway.

During the two days of inservice preceding the opening of school, Lattimer was smitten at first sight while she, on the other hand, only saw him as her new principal.

"I meant it when I said I'll take some kind of action if you don't leave me alone. I consider this harassment."

"Just give me another chance. I can be different."

"Then be different for someone else." She shut the door behind her leaving him standing in the corridor.

A few evenings later, while on a date with a teacher she had been seeing somewhat regularly, Mary O'Day happened to notice that someone who looked like her principal was following them. On closer inspection, she recognized him. Rather than confront Lattimer, her escort decided to take her home; he did not want to participate in what was becoming a messy situation. That night, Mary could see Lattimer's car parked outside her house and remained there most of the night.

O'Day stated her position to Ted Duncan, the superintendent of schools, the next day. Duncan was shocked by what he heard. There had been no harassment problems before in his school system, and he didn't want any now. He assured Mary that she would not be bothered anymore. After she left, he tried to understand why Lattimer, the best principal in the system, was putting his career in jeopardy. Without delay, he called Lattimer into his office.

"Red, I don't know what's wrong with you, but we can't have this kind of behavior in our schools. You, my best principal! Chasing around some teacher!"

"It's just a spat we had. She'll get over it. We've been dating some time now, she'll come around. She really likes me, she told me so. You know I wouldn't do anything to hurt my crew. You know they love me."

Duncan interrupted Lattimer's rambling, "If you have problems, the school is no place to solve them. I don't want this teacher coming back to me again complaining about you. If you're not careful, you're going to be facing a sexual harassment suit."

"She's exaggerating. You know me better than that!"

"Hey, I thought I did. By the way, your colleague principals have nominated you as the best principal in our school system. Don't make me think they've made a mistake."

By springtime, O'Day had almost forgotten her troubles with her principal. He paid her no attention these days. Indeed, he ignored her whenever he could, visiting all classrooms except hers. He even avoided the required annual evaluation of her performance until she demanded it. Mary believed that her work was first-rate and wanted evidence of it in her personnel file. When he could delay no longer, he finally consented to visit her. From the way he sat in her classroom scowling at everything, she was sure he was taking his revenge by giving her an unfavorable evaluation. He departed without saying a word.

Before she knew the results, she complained to the superintendent about the unfairness she was anticipating. He promised to look into the matter, and doing so, discovered that Lattimer had given her an especially high rating. Considering her newness to teaching, he was, to say the least, surprised. When he reported the results to O'Day, she felt embarrassed and made it a point to thank the principal for his confidence in her teaching. Unfortunately, their meeting reinforced Lattimer's conviction that she was fond of him. As she sat on the other side of his desk, all he could see was the pleased smile on her beautiful face and all he could hear was that she had forgiven him.

When she left, he was absolutely positive that she once again considered him a favorable suitor. Given a second chance, he was not about to delay. The same night, he bought a wedding ring with a diamond the size of small marble. He would be in debt for this purchase, but he didn't care if she would accept the ring and become his wife. From there, he returned to his office to write a letter asking for her hand in marriage, telling her how much he loved her and promising her that he would be all that she wanted. He also declared that he would provide her with the best things in life; in fact, his promises appeared to be endless.

When she read the letter and saw the ring accompanying it, she couldn't believe her eyes. The man was just plain stupid if he didn't get the message. With a copy of the letter in hand, she marched into Superintendent Duncan's office and dropped both it and the ring on his desk.

"If this matter is not resolved immediately, I am going to file a sexual harassment suit against the district. I have already had words with my father's attorney." She announced all of this while towering over Duncan as he sat at his desk, picking up the letter periodically to wave in his face.

Although Principal Lattimer seemed to be visiting all the classrooms, it soon became obvious that the first grade of Mary O'Day held his singular attention.

Duncan wasted no time in calling Lattimer into his office. Shaking his head, the superintendent said, "Like it or not, I am relieving you of your post pending further investigation into your problem with O'Day. I warned you before and you paid no attention. This time there is no warning. Until this matter is addressed by the board, you can just stay home and wait. I suggest you find a lawyer fast — more than competent one, I might add."

Lattimer felt like a two-ton truck had struck him. He was totally crushed and awaiting his demise. His professional life was finished. He had lost his true love. He would be the laughing stock of the school system. His mother would never let him hear the end of it. Collecting a few things from his office, he said a final goodbye to his two secretaries with tears in his eyes and left.

For the remainder of the afternoon, Superintendent Duncan was besieged with phone calls. Word had spread like wildfire through the system and even into the community. Within two days, he was bombarded by an army of parents who wanted the principal reinstated. The students made a similar plea, and the faculty petitioned along with parents to bring back Lattimer. Some of the phone calls were from anonymous callers, one of which suggested that the superintendent check into the teacher's background. "It's not O'Day's first year of teaching as she claims. Ask her about the district she taught in before she came to Saybody and why she was kicked out." When Duncan asked the caller to identify herself, she hung up. Another caller claimed that she was "a flirt and asked for everything she got." A

After Mary O'Day had stated her charges of harassment against Lattimer, Superintendent Duncan tried to understand why the best principal in the system would put his career in jeopardy.

third simply said,

"Throw the troublemaker out." The voice was muffled as if speaking through a handkerchief.

On impulse, Duncan called the university she had attended to check on her application references. His first try was abortive, but on his second attempt, he reached Professor Stay, the least flattering of the three mentors in extoling the virtues of their former pupil. She informed him that O'Day did, in fact, have a teaching position before she came to Saybody. But, "I don't know why she left the district mid year; somebody told me she was being married and leaving the state. That was a few years ago, though, not last year." When Duncan spoke to Professor Radish, he found the man extremely vague. Listening to him, Duncan wondered if he even knew O'Day. Perhaps he had a master recommendation form which he altered slightly for each student. On further prodding, however, Radish seemed to be finally remembering her.

"Ah yes, she was quite a popular girl. A socialite, sorority type. Smart! Came from money, I believe. She never seemed to have any, though. Always borrowing one thing or another. You say she's working for you now; it's been several years since I saw her. Tall redhead, isn't she?"

While Duncan continued his investigation, the phone calls and letters continued at high tide, some pro O'Day, but mostly supporting Lattimer. The principal remained in seclusion awaiting his fate. He couldn't feel more repentant, but he was afraid his fate was now sealed and his career ruined.

O'Day was receiving much attention lately and when she did, it was of a negative nature. Everybody was avoiding her like the plague. She longed for the close of the school year when she could leave Saybody. Increasingly distraught, she suddenly called the superintendent and blurted that she could no longer work under the present conditions. The district had ruined her life, and both board and superintendent would rue the day they ever appointed a person like Lattimer a principal. The next day, the district was served with a harassment suit threatening to put Saybody into a poorhouse.

Meanwhile Superintendent Duncan gathered all the data he could to take to the board when the members would meet the next week to discuss the Crimson letter and the events leading up to it. There were still many answers to find before he could deal with the questions that the board members were likely to have.

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Case study and/or case study responses submitted for publication should be sent to Philip T. West, Professor of Educational Administration, Harrington Education Center, Room 222, Texas A&M, College Station, TX 77843-4226.

Response to Case Study in Vol. 17, No. 1

Case Study Response

Red's Rejected Romance

by Maynard J. Bratlien

When addressing the board of education regarding the Lattimer-O'Day sexual harassment issue, Superintendent Duncan should recommend that the district, with the help of its attorney, resist/oppose the lawsuit brought by the teacher, Mary O'Day. The district's position would be that the alleged inappropriate and unwanted over-attention by Principal Lattimer was apparently made during after school and off-duty hours rather than in the workplace.

Initially, Red's infatuation with and attentions to Ms. O'Day were received favorably by her. After she lost interest and attempted to end the relationship, there were some developments which had negative ramifications in the workplace, such as his over-attention in her classroom. However, after O'Day confronted him publicly and Superintendent Duncan counseled him privately, Lattimer substantially decreased his attentions to her. During his personal withdrawal during the spring semester, he did conduct a classroom evaluation of O'Day, giving her a favorable rating. In this light, O'Day cannot maintain that her professional future has been damaged by the principal.

The district's stance should be that whatever transpired between these two employees in their private lives is a matter in which the school should not intervene. Another point not to be stated overtly however, because of the lawsuit, involves Duncan's reasonable knowledge that Lattimer's external liaisons have not transgressed into the area of sexual harassment. Rather, the external liaisons involve the apparent rejection on O'Day's part of Lattimer's romantic declarations.

Superintendent Duncan should continue investigating the backgrounds of both employees and document his findings legally to be usable during the court proceedings. He must also reinstate Lattimer and reassign him to another campus while the situation is being resolved. This would afford Lattimer the presumption of innocence until proven otherwise and placate the vocal segment supporting the principal. Additionally, it would help avoid another possible lawsuit against the district by Lattimer for unjust dismissal and avert the immediate explosiveness of having two employees in the same work setting who are at odds.

Maynard J. Bratlien is an associate professor of educational administration at Texas A&M University.

Total Quality Management Approach Appears to Generate Trust and Collegiality in Schools

by Randy Turk and Philip T. West

In a recent study of total quality management in education, a Southwest junior high and middle school and a Midwest junior high school were selected for on-site observation and analysis. Although the approaches to TQM seemed to vary, the method appears highly compatible with any total campus leadership effort. It also seems to build trust between administrators and staff, an integral aspect of achieving a total staff commitment to change.

Through academic teaming, TQM provides teachers with opportunities to share in a school's decision-making process. This creates a climate of collegiality, which spawns not only shared leadership but also the responsibility that it entails. In doing so, it enhances the meeting of individual student needs. Evidently, the extended use of TQM inspires trust and improves school climate, as all members of the school family come to feel that they have a stake in the educational enterprise.

Principals are Responsible for TQM Success. The consistent, non-coercive behavior of the principals involved was as essential in building trust as trust was in achieving total staff commitment. In this light, the success of establishing a total quality management environment lies on the shoulders of the principal. The principal of one of the junior high schools, claiming that breaking down barriers is synonymous with developing a climate of creating families and being "all for one," states, "Bonding occurs when life (events) happen."

This comment refers to the staff's ability to share the joys and sorrows of each other's lives. As an extension of his trust, he empowers the academic teams with full responsibility for their students' discipline. The teachers refer all student discipline to the academic teams, which have authority to assign in-school suspension and expulsion and to deal with other problems normally handled by administrators. The results include a significant, positive effect on student respect and the learning environment.

The principal of the other junior high school empowers an academic team to be highly innovative in meeting students' needs. Named the with-it team, these teachers instituted a tutorial period by shortening each core class 10 minutes, and the principal set aside a once-a-week, 30-minute period called candy cafe to bring students together to socialize. Each class participates in this social activity every third week.

The three principals model non-coercive, lead-management behaviors in various ways. Their collaborative leadership allows their administrators and staff members to implement programs that enhance student academic, emotional, and social development. The principal of the middle school, for example, participates as a staff member, not as a leader. He works as an equal partner with his staff to achieve consensus in decisions. The staff responds by displaying mutual respect for each other, which transcends the barriers of position.

Academic Teaming Is Important Factor. Another indication of the total quality management teamwork principle is academic teaming. Academic teams create peer support and interdisciplinary instruction at each of the three schools. As a result of this collegial climate, the stress level of the staff, especially the teachers, is low. Collegiality helps the teachers in supporting each other and becoming mentors, as well as being mentored.

Each of the three schools has established a culture of not only trust but also teamwork. This is reflected in many ways, such as believing that the principal would discontinue a program perceived as ineffective by the teachers, and reaching an effective consensus on difficult problems. However, two of the three schools, both of which had been using TQM longer than the other school, seem to have more deeply embedded trust and teamwork.

Conclusions

An analysis of the on-site observations and interviews provides the following conclusions:

- All three schools have adopted the principles of total quality management as an integral aspect of their leadership.
- All three schools use considerably different approaches in implementing TQM.
- The non-coercive, lead-management style of the principals in these schools creates a climate that nurtures a collaborative decision-making environment.
- The three principals accept the responsibility of modeling consistent, lead-management behavior and through this modeling have successfully implemented the TQM philosophy into their schools.

The principles of TQM are accepted, modeled, and practiced by staff members, as well as administrators, thereby heightening the role which staff members are expected to perform.

- Building trust between administrators and staff is an integral aspect of achieving total staff commitment.
- Academic teaming supports a collegial climate that reduces the stress level of teachers and creates an interdisciplinary learning environment.
- Even though TQM has a positive effect on the learning environment of the three participating secondary schools, it is too soon to assess the effect it has on student achievement.
- Responses to the questionnaire portion of the study sent to the initial eight secondary schools appear to indicate that not all schools have developed a collegial climate. These responses also revealed that the different stages of TQM implementation seem to have an effect on each school's degree of collaborative leadership and collegiality. (TQM leadership requires a high level of trust, which presumably is enhanced over time.)

The purpose of this study was to determine by assessing, not judging, the extent and ways that three selected secondary schools have implemented total quality management as their leadership style. Qualitative and naturalistic inquiry methodology were used to examine the TQM programs implemented in eight secondary schools, which had been recommended by certain members of the University Council of Education Administration as being exemplary.

During the quantitative phase of the study, a questionnaire was sent to these eight schools. From this data, three schools were selected and invited to participate in the qualitative part of the study. During this phase of the study, on-site visitations were made to two schools in the Southwest: a large, suburban junior high school housing grades 7 through 9 and a middle school with 475 6th grade students; and one school in the Midwest, a junior high school of 6th through 8th grade containing 565 students.

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Book Reviews

by Arthur W. Steller

Books for review and requests to serve as a guest book reviewer may be sent to editor Arthur W. Steller, Deputy Superintendent of Boston Public Schools, 30 Carruth St., Boston, MA 02124.

Star Teachers of Children in Poverty. By Martin Haberman. Kappa Delta Pi, P. O. Box A, West Lafayette, IN 47906-0576. 1995, $15.

Social problems of the majority of inner city school is especially challenging to educators, demanding special teachers with unique talents in these settings.

Martin Haberman has dedicated much of his professional work to the study of what he labels "star teachers," those who are successful under these circumstances. According to his national assessment, between 5-8 percent of the teachers in the 120 largest school districts serving 12 million children are star teachers. This is based upon the opinions of parents, principals, other teachers, and central office administrators, and the results of standardized student tests.

From Haberman's book one assumes that teachers can modify their behaviors to become star teachers. For example, the author writes that "star teachers are not too concerned with discipline. They have a few rules, usually less than four, and usually established at the beginning of each year." Star teachers have a difference perception of their jobs, also. "They act with confidence on tentatively held beliefs rather than present a frazzled, hurried, or authoritarian image to their class."

Other conclusions that many would find surprising originating from high performance teachers:

- Punishment doesn't work
- Homework should be able to be done totally independent
- Parents are not to blame
- As little time as possible should be spent on testing and grading
- Monitoring the students' time on tasks is not an appropriate methodology
- Rewards and reinforcements are not used as payoffs.

The best part of this book (and the longest) is a chapter on topics such as protecting learners and learning, putting ideas into practice, approaching at-risk children, dealing with the bureaucracy, fallibility, maintaining emotional and physical stamina, organizing, emphasizing effort not ability, convincing students that "I need you here," and teaching gently in a violent society.

This slim volume is provocative reading whether one agrees or disagrees with the content. It should stimulate much thought about the teaching profession.

School Change. By Seymour Sarason. Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027. 1995, $23.95.

One of the scholars most influencing the thinking about change in schools is Seymour Sarason. His writings always have value for anyone concerned about school change. On the other hand, it is difficult to explain why Sarason is so widely studied because he is basically a pessimist about schools and improvement strategies. He had consistently predicted that various school reform efforts would fall far short of their goals. The fact that he has been correct may give some rationality to his popularity.

School Change was written by Sarason apparently as a platform for his own self-reflection about how he reached his former conclusions. Educators or others who want to understand some of their own frustration with educational reform programs will find solace in these pages.

How Smart Schools Get and Keep Community Support. By Susan and David Carroll. National Educational Service, P. O. Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402. 1994, $18.95.

The base of natural supporters for schools — parents — is shrinking. Demographics show that only 20-25% of taxpayers in most local communities have children in school. While educators can't change that percentage, they can enhance relationships with parents and other citizens through effective marketing.

The authors, experienced in working with educators, have adapted marketing techniques for use in public schools. They start by focusing upon "serving consumers or customers well, time after time, with attention to small, significant details." This attention to the customer yields high returns on the relationship development investment.

The basic demographic trends cited in this book as affecting public education are well known to most educators. Twenty-five percent of all children are born into poverty. Children in single-parent households will face a higher risk of poverty. What to do about this fact is a bit more elusive with only limited assistance coming from the authors." ...Schools should find better ways to build effective relationships with the community and stimulate involvement in public education. Okay, but how? The author's answers, though not directly correlated to this problem are generally useful.

Recognizing that refocusing upon a customer orientation is not simple, the Carrolls have formed a 10-step process for transforming schools:

1. Determine what barriers exist to a customer focus, ways to remove them and the methods you can use to construct a new message by reviewing your organization.
2. Identify all contact points with your customer, assess their impact, and then make as many as possible into positive experiences.
3. Review all policies — are they for the school's benefit or the customer's benefit?
4. Encourage all employees to embrace a positive customer attitude.
5. Recognize that the school system will benefit from any investment of effort/money/time in customer satisfaction.
6. Always treat each and every customer segment with respect, trust, intelligence, and courtesy.
7. Train all employees in the dos and don'ts of customer orientation with the assumption that people will act the ``right way" if they are trained properly.
8. Evaluate all the staff and the school system on the implementation of this customer-oriented philosophy. Base rewards on exemplary displays of customer orientation.
9. Institute systematic and thorough input mechanisms so your customers can regularly communicate what they want, need, like, and dislike throughout the year as well as formally once a year.
10. Conduct all strategic planning with your customer needs and wants in mind.

Identifying marketing segments are part of building a comprehensive database advocated by the authors. This means compiling as much descriptive data as possible and psychographic information for complete customer profiles through surveys and focus groups.

The World's Best Known Marketing Secret: Building Your Business With Word-of-Mouth Marketing.

By Ivan Misner. Bard & Stephen, 5275 McCormick Mountain Dr, Austin, TX. 1994, $14.95.

Word-of-mouth is one of the oldest and most widely recognized ways to have your message distributed. We all know this, but what has been missing is how to tap into this powerful method of advertising. This book opens the door for imaginative school administrators.

The name of Ivan Misner may be familiar to some as the founder of Business Network International, an organization designed to facilitate the exchange of business referrals. From an initial chapter in Arcadia, California, it has expanded to over 300 chapters. This widely publicized successful group has been based upon the premise that "if you want to get business, you have to give business."

Developing a word-of-mouth marketing program is an effective, potentially lucrative way of generating more business. Readers will relish the practical tips of unleashing the power of their Rolodexes, connecting with networks, and choosing contacts strategically.

The practicality is evident in basic fundamentals such as making effective introductions: *The best way to introduce yourself is to prepare a series of scripts. One of your scripts should be an overview of what you do. Other presentations can address various aspects of your products or service. Here is a recommended sequence for a script:*

- *Your name*
- *Your business or profession*
- *A memory hook (a quick, ear-catching phrase)*
- *A benefit statement of one particular product or service you offer (what you do that can help others).*

Hand-to-mouth WOMBAT (Word-of-Mouth Business Acquisition Tactics) is treated in Part I. Its two main components are: developing a powerful, diverse network of contacts, and creating a positive message delivered effectively.

The building blocks of communications are based upon cultivating relationships. And educators need to be reminded that long-lasting referrals are as applicable to education as to business.

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations

A refereed journal–scholarly articles by academic/higher education authorities are refereed by an international editorial review board. The *Journal* also accepts articles by practitioners and administrators in basic (K-12) education and journalists at large.

Scope

Articles are sought on topics such as internal communication and climate, employee motivation, parent involvement, partnerships, working with the news media, community participation, audits, surveying and polls, community service programs for students, communication training, advisory committees, volunteers, writing and speaking, publications, alumni associations, foundations, mentoring, photography, and related topics.

The overall goal of the *Journal* is to support efforts to enhance/foster student achievement and staff productivity, and to provide information to build public knowledge of the value and potential benefits of a sound basic education of our youth. We advocate the concept that the school public relations function must be based on fact and reality as compared to ideals and goals of educators and the community at large.

Style

Scholarly articles should be prepared following style guidelines of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association.

We prefer citations to be numbered sequentially in the text and then detailed following the article. An author can include references of related articles/book with address of publishers—in a separate list. We accept photographs, illustrations and tables as appropriate.

Submissions

- Submit four copies of a manuscript with a letter from the author(s).
- Articles should be 1,000 to 3,500 words in length.
- If produced on a computer, supply a disk, clearly labeled, in ASCII format, IBM format only, with the text copies.
- Include an abstract of the article and a two-three sentence credit for each author on a separate sheet.
- Advise if the article has been published or is being considered elsewhere.
- Queries for articles on specific topics are welcomed.
- SASE. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for reply to submissions or queries.
- Response to an article or a query is usually conveyed to an author within 60 days.

Address manuscripts and correspondence to Albert E. Holliday, Editor and Publisher, *Journal of Educational Relations*, Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657 (UPS address-1830 Walnut St., Camp Hill, PA 17011) 717-761-6620.

Previous *Journals* are available in microfilm from University Microfilm Int., 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Refer to *Journal of Educational Communications* (1975-83), *Journal of Educational Public Relations* (1984-95) and *Journal of Educational Relations* (1995-).

SPEAKERS' ANTI-FEAR CHECKLIST

by Edwards A. Holliday

E _ _ to begin, finish before you start.

N _ G _ T _ _ T _ up front, state benefits and reasons to listen.

T _ _ _ T yourself by being prepared and the audience will trust you.

H _ _ _ fun.

U _ _ _ R _ _ _ _ D before seeking to be understood.

S _ _ it short and keep it simple.

I _ _ N _ _ F _ with your audience's feelings, thoughts & experiences.

A _ _ N _ _ L _ _ G _ self-limitations, manage your weaknesses.

S _ _ _ D on your abilities, build on your strengths.

T _ K _ charge of the room setup, lectern, tables and visual aids.

I _ _ T _ _ T _ involvement with your audience.

C _ R _ enough to observe the audience's nonverbal cues and respond.

C _ _ _ T _ internal energy to ignite your own passion by breathing.

O _ _ N your heart first, your mind second, and your mouth third.

N _ _ _ R quit early; yet conclude before your audience stops listening.

F _ _ G _ _ about yourself (what are they thinking of me?) and your ego.

I _ _ _ R _ _ L _ Z _ your opening, main points, and closing.

D _ _ _ D _ in advance the one thing your audience will remember.

E _ C _ _ _ _ _ G _ your listeners to take action.

N _ V _ _ _ T _ using multiple senses -- sound, sight and touch.

C _ _ T _ _ L your body movements, gestures, tone and volume.

E _ G _ G _ their minds to think and fill their hearts to feel.

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The Journal of Educational RELATIONS

Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships ✐ Vol. 17 No. 2

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This is an adaption of a model used by the publishers of *Boardroom Reports* and *Communication Briefings* newsletters. The notice serves two purposes: it identifies and gives credit to the author/publisher, and gives a reader necessary information in case the reader would want to obtain or purchase to the cited publication.

We have tried to extend this policy to citations used by writers of articles. Many of the references are to otherwise hard-to-located books and journals, and we owe readers mailing address and price information.

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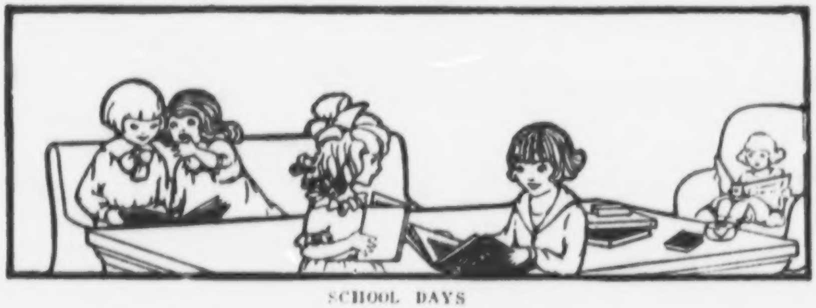
We like to share information and ideas, and believe that providing on-copy credits in detail should be an industry standard.

Al Holliday



SCHOOL DAYS

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by the Journal Staff

Communication Survey Report—

School PR Directors Cite Their Priorities

What are the greatest job frustrations of directors of district school PR programs? These are typical of the responses of the *Journal's* survey in April of 1995:

- "Having to get people out of jams, while those same people never responded to prior communication opportunities." Director of communication, a county system, Florida.
- "The inability of district staff — mainly the administrative team and superintendent — to recognize and respect the role of community relations and communication in their work." Coordinator of information, an area district, Wisconsin.
- "Lack of communication with the superintendent among all central office staff. The right hand does not know what the left hand is doing." Community relations director, city school district, Tennessee.
- "Constantly having to train new newspaper reporters." Public information coordinator, unified school district, California.
- "The media's focus on the negative." Community relations director, county district, Florida.
- "I must continually educate people on the importance of consistent communication. I remind them that communication may be in my title, but it's everyone's job." Supervisor of communication services, intermediate district, Michigan.

On the plus side, these are typical comments regarding their greatest job satisfaction:

- "When a principal telephones me and says the communication plan we devised worked." Communication director, public school system, Arizona.
- "Seeing something I coordinated affects students — mainly our partnership program." Public information officer, public district, Virginia.
- "When a student or staff member receives recognition for outstanding efforts." Principal/communication director, district schools, British Columbia.
- "Changing and improving our system's image." Superintendent of planning and communication, board of education, Canada.
- "Being allowed creative license to ensure success of programs that enhance communication and understanding." Coordinator of communication, school district, Wisconsin.

Overall, the respondents report that they enjoy their work, have too much to do in too little time, and believe their efforts are important, if not always appreciated.

Specific questions elicited these responses:

Your main function?

Most answered in terms of providing or coordinating a two-way flow of information between schools and their many publics. Many say their program exists to promote the positive aspects of the district and improve public understanding. Only two respondents connected their work to increasing student achievement.

To whom do you report?

Ninety-two percent report to the superintendent. Others report to the coordinator of board services, a principal, the director of public affairs or an assistant superintendent.

Do you have board policy on and/or a written program for the district's program of school-community relations - communication?

Seventy-one percent have board policy but only 53 percent have a written program. Unlike many aspects of school operation (finance, budgeting, state-mandated programs, for example), school-community relations and communication programs are not required by states or accreditation associations. Note that respondents are all directors of system PR programs. (In a study the Journal editor conducted in early 1995 of 20 school districts in the Harrisburg area, 50 percent had a board policy on this area but only 10 percent had a full - or part-time person working as a public relations specialist.)

What is the scope of your operation?

The highest priority (80%) is providing information through news releases and newsletters. Their second priority (60%) is serving as spokesperson with the media. Others are counseling the superintendent (54%) and acting as liaison with key communicators (50%).

Few respondents have a priority to coordinate volunteers, coordinate partnerships, work with mentors, counseling teachers about parent involvement, conducting surveys and writing speeches for administrators.

In an ideal situation, what changes would you make?

The news media, principals and other administrators, teachers and other staff — these would be the highest priority in an ideal situation for most respondents.

Many would reduce the amount of time they have to spend in meetings, preferring to use the time devoted to writing or counseling the staff.

What responsibilities would you drop if you could?

Responses were varied. Among the most often mentioned are photography, attending board meetings, having to "break in" new reporters, and doing routine graphics.

What are the results, in terms of audiences, of your communication program?

This question is shown as asked, with responses shown as percentages of respondents:

Do you believe your work enhances (the term is used in the sense of providing important information, assistance or stimulation):

		NOW		
		In large measure	To some degree	Not at all
a.	The effectiveness of administrators?	27	73	0
b.	The effectiveness of teachers?	7	70	23
c.	The effectiveness of the supporting staff?	5	88	7
d.	The understanding about school operations by parents?	43	57	0
e.	The understanding about school operations by citizens generally?	42	58	0
f.	The achievement of students?	11	59	30

		DESIRED		
		In large measure	To some degree	Not at all
a.	The effectiveness of administrators?	91	9	0
b.	The effectiveness of teachers?	58	36	2
c.	The effectiveness of the supporting staff?	69	31	0
d.	The understanding about school operations by parents?	98	2	0
e.	The understanding about school operations by citizens generally?	93	7	0
f.	The achievement of students?	57	38	4

The Now responses indicate that the main outcome of respondents' work is directed toward parents and the public and their understanding of school operations, with administrators shown as the third main audience. Teachers and students are not shown as outcome priorities to a substantial degree. When the Desired responses are contrasted with the Now responses, several differences can be noted.

Respondents indicate that administrators are almost as important as parents and the citizenry.

The biggest gain from Now to Desired is in the category of the supporting service staff. This may be accounted for because these employees are not organized/represented by a union/association as are teachers. The response may also indicate respondents' opinion that the supporting staff/group is an important element in the school "family" but is not given enough attention in the daily routine. The student audience shows gains in Desired responses, but not to a substantial degree.

How is your department assessed?

Assessment is a mixed situation at best. Some are never evaluated, some are evaluated by the superintendent once or twice a year. Many have annual communication plans and goals that they are judged against, while others react to events as they occur.

Almost to a person, the respondents say their greatest satisfaction comes when they can see that they have communicated successfully, and when their message has been received as it was intended. When a bond issue is approved, a program given the credit it deserved or student achievement recognized, then the satisfaction is even greater.

Editor's Commentary

The sample for this study was small. However, one can justify several observations.

1. Only slightly more than half (53%) of respondents have a written program of public relations or school-community relations.

Whether or not a written program is known/adopted by the superintendent or board is not the only important factor, although it would be desired. The importance is that the other 47% must have at least their own written program if they hope to be effective.

The nature of the job is such that one is confronted with a variety of challenges, some of them one-time occurrences and difficult to plan for. However, most tasks can be anticipated — having to issue newsletters, work with reporters, consult with the superintendent, etc.

Noting the majority of tasks in a written plan — even if it covers the PR office only — would seem to be an essential action for one's own guidance, direction and stimulation.

2. The study did not reveal any regular or consistent pattern of evaluation.

Of course, as Lewis Carroll taught us in Alice, if you don't know where you're going, it's difficult to know when you've arrived.

The written program should specify annual goals, means to achieve them, and methods to evaluate results and plan/revise for the next year. A school system may not have a definite program for evaluation of administrators. That should not restrict a school public relations director from drafting an evaluation instrument to be used by the director and superintendent (whether or not other administrators are formally evaluated) on a regular basis.

3. The lack of priority shown in the question/responses for teachers and students (the results item) was not unexpected. In fact, we suspect that the question *Do you believe your work enhances the achievement of students?* may have been the first time many respon-

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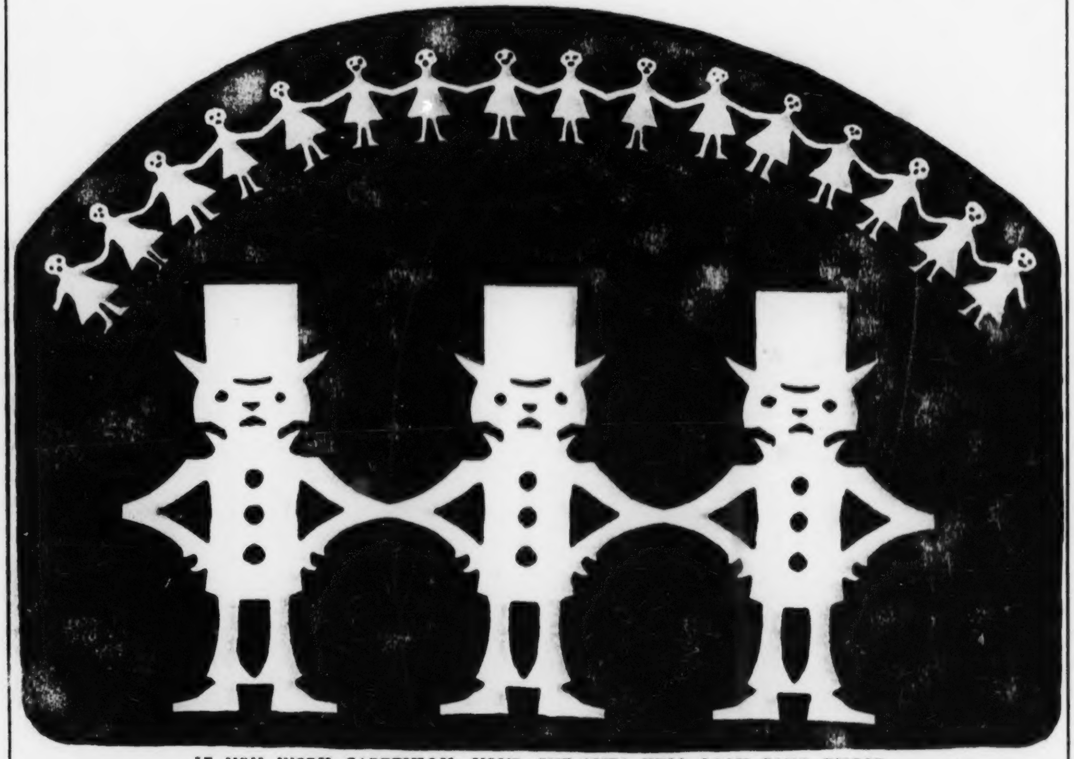
SOMETHING TO DO DEPARTMENT



IF YOU WORK CAREFULLY, YOUR CUT-OUTS WILL LOOK LIKE THESE

dents were asked to consider that factor as having something to do with their job. Other questions show a similar lack of priority for areas such as volunteers, partnerships and mentors.

In the foreword for a new book edited by Theodore J. Kowalski,* I identified two components of educational communication. The first is the political aspect, laying the groundwork for financial needs so that the public will adequately fund its schools. The second is the relational aspect. This refers to the interrelationships among educators, other staff, students, parents and citizens in the community. For example, partnerships and parent-volunteer contributions exemplify enhancements that can make a school outstanding, as these programs can be directly correlated to opportunities for improved student achievement.

Survey responses overall indicate that the political dimensions of the job are of major priority, and the relationships dimensions are of secondary or lower priority to respondents, who are all directors of their system's communication program.

The matter may be one of who provides stimulation for the kinds of accessory pro-

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**Public Relations in Educational Organizations*, edited by Theodore J. Kowalski, published in 1996 by Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632. ISBN 0-02-366235-2.

grams — such as parent involvement — that are proven to be vital in student achievement. Obviously, a principal and teachers are closest to their students and should be the primary force behind a useful program to work closely with parents — or businesses in partnerships or mentors or volunteers for that matter.

What the survey did not cover, in hindsight, was if or how well these relationship areas are being administered in schools. We asked if respondents believe their work enhances the achievement of students. A different question could have been "How does the overall system/individual schools communication and school-community relations program enhance the effectiveness of teachers, or the achievement of students, etc.?" That approach, which was beyond the fairly narrow scope of the survey, would have helped convey the message that all employees in an organization have specific roles in its communication program. The directors — the respondents in this survey — have specified roles as they have noted. A similar study — say of principals — could focus on their roles regarding parent-teacher involvement, seeking out mentors, principals' involvement with community leaders, etc.

In the meantime, we can fairly suggest that a school system's PR director should have two concerns. One is the traditional function for their work as represented by the priorities they report in this study. The second is to be a coordinator, resource person or a stimulant to others in the school family to be sure that all elements of a comprehensive school-community relations program across the system are in place, are being conducted via tasks identified in the job descriptions of all employees and are evaluated at least annually.

We live in an age when public schools are under massive and often unfair criticism. To ask that public school system officials embrace traditional school public relations as an essential activity would seem to be — on one hand — self serving in terms of keeping schools operating along the status quo. A genuine effort on the part of boards and superintendents to obtain two-way communication and build relations within the overall school-community would seem to be — on the other hand — means to create more effective schools and increase student achievement.

We commend those on the front line of the school PR field and the respondents to this survey. We wish them well in their efforts to stimulate school officials to "recognize and respect the role of community relations and communication" in the continuing effort to strengthen public education.

About the Survey:

In March, 1995, we sent a 40-item survey to about 300 Journal subscribers who have job titles indicating they are in charge of a school district's program of school-community relations, public information or information. Sixty-two people in the United States and Canada responded, and the percentage of responses limits the degree to which results can be generalized to practitioners. However, their reports of priorities, successes, failures and frustrations should ring true to many of their colleagues and provide insights into how the communications function is organized and operated.

Tabulation of the survey and much of the commentary for the survey was prepared by John Hope, a communication professional in the hospital industry and a freelance writer and editor in the Harrisburg, Pa., area.

by Heather-jane Robertson

PUBLIC EDUCATION WORKS, DESPITE ITS NAME

I ran across a small item in an American education magazine I was scanning recently. It reported that Texas teachers had hired an advertising firm to develop a public relations plan to promote the quality of education received in that state's public schools. The advertising firms advice? Drop the word "public" if you want to convince parents and taxpayers that you are talking about good schools.

So it has come to this, at least in Texas. What is "public," rather than "private," is connoted as inferior, haphazard, indolent. What is "private" is of the marketplace, of the "real world," and therefore of higher quality. Our system of universal education, necessarily public, thus suffers from the fallout of ideological orthodoxy: it is more important to be consumer than citizen, more valid to compete than to serve.

Schools have little in common with consumerism: schools do not preach competition, they do not cut their losses, exploit their advantages or create profitable market niches.

Schools do not set out to respond to transitory consumer preferences. Established to meet collective goals and to provide the basis for informed adult lives, schools have little in common with the ruthlessly individualistic premises of consumerism. It is this characteristic that marks schools as vulnerable, for today if you are out of the marketplace, you are out of the loop. It is against this backdrop of contempt for what is publicly determined and freely available that our schools are condemned by those indescribably distant from the realities of the classroom. This issue of distance is key to perception: across North America, it is those closest to schools—students, parents, recent graduates—who judge schools to be more successful than those who have little first-hand experience. This latter group, of course, derives its opinions concerning what is being called "the public policy issue of the '90s" primarily from the media, whose shoddy treatment of complex education issues is more than familiar to teachers.

Public education is not perfect, but it does work. There is a vast amount of different kinds of evidence to support this claim. Some point to the number of Canadians who enter postsecondary education: according to the United Nations, with 64 percent of Canadians aged 20 to 24 still studying, Canada leads all other nations in participation in higher education. Others note that keeping more than 80 percent of our students in school until they graduate is a great accomplishment, since fewer than half graduated only a generation ago.

Program diversity demonstrates the capacity of schools to adapt to change: Canada has the highest rate per capita of cooperative-education students in the world. More challenging than program diversity is student diversity, and too few realize our inclusive system in unique. In no small part, our relative prosperity is due to our education system, and so is the efficiency of our workers. Not all our important accomplishments are economic, however. Our history of sustaining a peaceful and progressive democracy speaks most eloquently to the quality of education Canadians have received.

No nation could attain the status of "best country in the world in which to live" without an extraordinary effective system of education. We cannot retain this status by providing an elite education for a privileged class and "training" for the rest. Our education system was

> *Wrong criticisms put forth for the wrong reasons . . . silence us from being self critical and provoke us into defensiveness.*

based on classical assumptions about the value of a liberal education, which derives from beliefs about the attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to "live in liberty." Given the problems before us, living in liberty with wisdom and compassion is no small task, but it is the most important work of schools. Our reluctance to part with this vision, as a profession, has made us "part of the problem" in the eyes of our critics; foot-dragging impediments to importing into schools the pragmatism of the marketplace. Our belief system, as well as our competence, is under attack.

This is part of what Maude Barlow and I examine in *Class Warfare: The Assault on Canada's Schools*. In examining the substance and the tactics of our critics, we conclude that either we are dealing with a massive coincidence of ineptitude by the misinformed, or we are being subjected to a sustained and intentional assault on the foundation of democracy.

Whether we succeed in convincing you that the latter explanation is the more plausible is, in some ways, beside the point. What all of us must deal with, in either case, is the great vulnerability created when public confidence in schools is undermined, and when we are forced to respond to the wrong criticisms, put forward for the wrong reasons.

This is dangerous because it distracts us from dealing with the real vulnerabilities of education, our real limitations. It silences us from being self-critical and provokes us into defensiveness. We can't afford to speak of our own limitations as professionals, our own problems with change and growth or to admit how difficult it is to do things well. Increasingly, we are tempted to blame our shortcomings on the nature of our students, unwittingly replicating the "downloading" of social and political problems for which we condemn others. Regrettably, this is heard by some as an invitation to abandon public education and its problems to the solutions of our critics.

The goal of "learning to live in liberty" is considerably more difficult than providing students with what is required to "live in utility." Schools are not pre-employment centres for pre-adults. If this is their only purpose, then we might as well turn over our schools to the private sector, which will be more willing (in the words of one Canadian businessman) to become "the bootcamps for training the soldiers of the waters of global competition." If we are to help the public resist this concept of the work of the schools, we need to present a vision that is equally compelling, more thoughtful, driven by principles more human—and humane—than survival of the fittest.

We must help Canadians to see children as more than future producers and consumers, and to see education as more than a pragmatic "investment," or else the future for guiding children in the skills of liberty is very bleak. If public education is to continue to work, this is where we must begin.

Heather-jane Robertson is director of professional development services with the Canadian Teachers' Federation. She is co-author of Class Warfare: The Assault on Canada's Schools, published in 1994 by Key Porter Books. The article is reprinted from the ATA Magazine (Alberta Teachers' Assn., Barnett House, 11010-142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1; the magazine is published quarterly at $20).

WHO INFLUENCED YOU?

Recognizing People Who Made a Real Difference

Some years ago, a feature of the annual AASA convention was presentation of the School Bell award to a prominent person who honored an educator who had contributed to that person's success. (The NSPRA staff coordinated the project.)

In the same spirit, in 1986, we asked 14 people in the school public relations field to tell about the people who most influenced their public relations careers. Their recollections appeared in Vol. 9, No. 2 (3rd quarter 1986) of the *Journal.*

The value of these testimonials goes beyond the public recognition of the people cited. Such items could be a regular feature of school district periodicals, for example, in which a noted graduate pays tribute to a local teacher or educator. These narratives can be a means to stimulate the awareness of citizens and parents about the lifelong influences that teachers contribute to our youth. The late Lee Goodman (then an official with the National Association of Elementary School Principals) told about a sign he saw in England that read: *As you stand here, remember those who enlarged the horizon of your mind and pray for all those who teach.*

Recently, we asked more than a score of people to tell about people who have most influenced them, and the narratives of four of those who responded follows.

J. Lloyd Trump

By Mel Heller

Although many persons have been instrumental in whatever success I have achieved, no one has been as powerful an influence as the late, great Dr. J. Lloyd Trump. Dr. Trump was one of the best-known educators in the 1960s and mid-1970s. Acknowledged as the "father" of team teaching, his message to fellow educators was the stimulus for most of the innovations that schools experienced 30-plus years ago. Team teaching and the Trump Plan were synonymous and many tributes and honors were awarded to him. Many of his views have been rediscovered under new labels and, unfortunately, without due credit to him for these "new" waves of "excellence" that schools are now adopting.

My association with Dr. Trump changed my professional and personal life. His poise, knowledge, humility, creativity, dedication, and direction and guidance of our inner circle, as well as his love for Martha, his wife and constant companion, were educational and inspirational. This made a life-lasting impact on me.

I first met Dr. Trump when I was in charge of curriculum at Ridgewood High School in Norridge, Illinois. At that time, he was the director of research for the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Ridgewood was a newly formed high school district organized to implement Dr. Trump's ideas. Superintendent Eugene Howard, Dr. Trump and I met frequently to develop the program which made Ridgewood a nationally known example of team teaching.

My role at Ridgewood was to guide the high school staff — all of whom worked in teams — to provide large group, small group, and individualized instruction to all students via our modular schedule. This role was challenging and often frustrating. It was an exciting venture, however, and I knew that I could count on Dr. Trump for insight and encouragement.

Fortunately for me, Dr. Trump decided that I should become a leading spokesman for team teaching. While he had served that role exceptionally well, he needed help to spread the word. School districts were looking then, as now, for ways to improve, and team teaching held great promise. Due partly to Dr. Trump's recommendations and partly to requests from the many educators who visited Ridgewood, I was invited to consult, write articles and speak at school districts, state and national conferences, and conventions.

I spent two years at Ridgewood and then one year as a researcher in Cleveland before joining Loyola University of Chicago as a faculty member.

About this same time, Dr. Trump began an administrative intern program, sponsored by the NASSP and funded by the Ford and Danforth foundations. Dr. Trump and four university professors directed the national project. School superintendents selected potential administrators to serve as interns to implement team teaching and related innovations in their schools. Midway through the project, Dr. Trump asked me to join the supervising team. Loyola provided me with the freedom to work on the project for more than two years with Dr. Trump and other members of the team.

By then, Dr. Trump was a celebrity in education. At regional seminars and at national conventions, people viewed him in awe. I, too, felt overwhelmed by being one of his inner group. He treated each of us as professional colleague. He knew how to use our talents at these sessions: One was philosophical, two discussed nuts and bolts, and one was the wrap-up speaker using humor. The role of wrap-up speaker and humorist became my assignment. The experiences I had in this role led to numerous speaking engagements throughout the United States and to many contacts with educators. After all these years, some of these same educators are still inviting me to address their staffs. My consulting and speaking assignments have expanded beyond team teaching topics but there is no question about how I began.

In my association with him, Dr. Trump's advice was clear, direct, and consistent: "You have the ability and talent to make an impact in education. If you are bold enough and have the courage of your convictions, you will succeed." His words still guide me. In this era of fast-buck elixir salespeople who can "cure" all the ills of education if the price is right, Dr. J. Lloyd Trump stands out like a beacon. He sincerely believed in team teaching and he devoted much of his time freely. He was an educator. I am forever indebted to him.

Mel Heller is a professor in the School of Education, Loyola University (Mallinckrodt Campus, 1041 Ridge Rd., Wilmette, Illinois 60091-1591).

William Dow Boutwell

by Ben Brodinsky

The person who made the difference in my career (in fact, made my career) is William Dow Boutwell, who, when he died, some ten years ago, was with Scholastic Magazines in New York City.

When I first met Bill Boutwell in 1934, he was head of the information office of what was then the United States Office of Education, and editor of its official journal, School Life. I had just gotten my M. A. in education from the University of Pennsylvania, and I hitchhiked from Wilmington, Delaware, to Washington to find a job. I

marched straight to the office of the Commissioner, George F. Zook, asked for a job and was told there were jobs but no money to pay for them. I said I would work without pay; the answer was that it was impossible; that I would have to accept $1.00 a year; which was fine with me, except that a 15% pay cut was being instituted for all federal employees and I ended up with 85 cents annual pay.

It was then that I was assigned to work with Bill Boutwell. The great passion of Bill Boutwell was first, the public schools of the country; and second. clear simple writing. I caught both of these fevers from him.

Bill Boutwell loved and honored public education. He did not have a philosophic base for his passion — Bill Boutwell's strength was action, not philosophizing. He saw the public schools as the chief medium for the advancement of the common people of the United States. He sensed their power to elevate the lives and happiness of each and every person in our land. He respected what the public schools were doing for the education of each child. And, he saw the additional roles of the schools in our land. For example, he would point to the facts that when there was a flood, the public schools' buildings were used for relief; when there was an election, the public school buildings were used as polling places; when people in the towns had local, municipal problems, the buildings were used as places for discussion and debate.

Bill taught me the art and skill of clear, simple writing. He taught me to avoid adjectives and adverbs in a sentence and to rely on nouns and verbs. He preached the short sentence, but he recognized that a long sentence is often necessary and that a judicious combination of the two — plus the use of varieties of sentences, such as the compound and the periodic sentence — adds to the power of the written word. We were early experimenters in assessing reading difficulty — long before the famed reading formulas came to the surface.

After several years of working together, we teamed as instructors at American University, in Washington, developing courses in writing for government employees. One element in these courses was the principle of "getting so close to your subject or topic that you could feel it." Bill Boutwell argued that writers all too often write about a topic as if it were in a far-away never, never land. "When you write about something, make the reader see it, hear it, feel it, smell it."

Ben Brodinsky is a past president of Ed Press Association of America and was a prime organizer of the Ed Press 100th anniversary in 1995. Now retired, he is a consultant at 327 Seabury Dr., Bloomfield, Connecticut 06002.

Tom Robinson

By Don Bagin

As you go through life, the chances are that someone will make an impression on you — one that changes your life.

In my case, that someone was Dr. Tom Robinson. Dr. Robinson was president of Glassboro State College (now Rowan College of New Jersey).

A colleague of his — Dr. Leslie Kindred, a national authority in educational public relations and my doctoral advisor at Temple University — suggested that Tom "take a chance on a 26-year-old PR person." He did — by hiring me to become his PR director and the person to head a yet-to-be developed graduate PR program at Glassboro.

As I reflect on how he helped me grow as a professional and as a person, I remember many things:

- The way he managed to go out of his way to communicate with everyone. He somehow made everyone feel important. As we walked around the campus, he would pause and say hello to everyone — be it a wandering freshman, a 30-year veteran in the custodial department, an administrator, or a campus visitor.
- The way he based all decisions on fairness. He would gather all the information available and then make a decision based on the facts and what was fair. "By treating everyone equally and making decisions based on what's right, you won't go wrong," he frequently advised other administrators.
- The way he looked to the future at all times. Although he wasn't a hockey fan, he certainly subscribed to the Wayne Gretzky theory of going for the puck where it's going to be. He constantly encouraged those who worked with him to identify trends and predict how those trends would have an impact on the college.
- The way he would constantly praise people for their efforts. Receiving a handwritten, one-sentence note from "Dr. Tom" would frequently make the day for many of us. It was his way of letting a person know that he was indeed noticing and appreciating his or her contribution. How much easier his positive recognition made it for all of us when he would disagree with something we had done or suggest that something could have been done better. After receiving 25 accolades, the reception of one negative reaction would certainly be acted on and put in perspective.
- The way he let everyone know that if a person's name would be associated with a Glassboro project or program, it should be done well. Somehow that standard of excellence permeated just about everything that was going on at Glassboro College. Many companies and colleges almost mandate mediocrity by giving tenure or its equivalent to people who don't approach excellence.

Some perpetuate the situation by then placing those people on committees to determine who gets tenure in the succeeding years.

- The way he emphasized the importance of communications to all who served on his staff. By sharing example after example, he let it be known that the president deemed it vital to make a major effort to do a first-rate job in this area.
- The way he responded to threats. When one professor whom he was not recommending for promotion threatened to sue, he replied that that was certainly her right, but he would share the same reasons in court that he had shared with her in private for not recommending the promotion. He was not one to look for the easy way by acquiescing to requests followed by threats.
- The way he recognized opinions and gathered feedback. About every two weeks, he would ask me to bring in 10 or 12 students selected at random from around the campus as well as a separate group of students representing a particular organization. He would ask them questions and make notes. Then he would turn the notes over to the appropriate administrators for action which he expected and received. The students' questions were answered. Changes were made when deemed necessary. Tom held meetings to improve the campus — and the students knew that their comments would indeed be heard.
- The way he encouraged ideas, establishing a climate where everyone felt comfortable making suggestions. If the idea was something that couldn't be implemented, the originator would always know why — and quickly.
- The way he built a climate of trust. His methods could easily serve as a model of establishing an internal climate of trust. If he told one group it was A and not B, he would tell the opposing group the same. Everyone didn't necessarily agree with the decisions, but each understood that a decision was based on what the college's leader thought was right.
- The way he encouraged people to grow, either making suggestions or giving the go-ahead on our suggestions. Sometimes, he simply turned us loose just to get a job done. This worked well because of another uncanny skill: hiring excellent people who would fit into the culture he established. The best advice he ever gave me has helped me in my career, and that was to "surround yourself with competent, conscientious people. And don't be afraid to hire people who are brighter than you are, they can only make you look better."
- How he always emphasized that people are more important than things. He would always make time to talk to people. Although his role carried lots of clout with important people in the state and country, Tom Robinson never forgot that he was a teacher. When national reporters or people he would meet socially would ask him what he did, he would say humbly, "I'm a teacher." And he was.

Don Bagin is a professor of communication at Rowan College of New Jersey. He and colleague Don Gallagher joined Leslie Kindred as co-authors of The School and Community Relations, now the most used college text for classes in school community relations.

Patrick Jackson

By Patricia Howlett

I almost didn't go. After all, it was just another workshop, right? And I'd been to enough of them and heard the same presentations about handling public information chores for schools until I was downright bored. School public relations had turned into a disappointment for me after four or five years.

Well, as it turned out, that just another workshop changed my life. It was Patrick Jackson presenting. He was telling his audience that public relations is a management function predicated on concepts of social science, not a bunch of clerical tasks to be done by a glorified secretary who happens to be able to write and "be nice."

Pat Jackson bounced around the front of the auditorium from one flip chart easel to another, energizing his audience with his enthusiasm and mesmerizing them with his good sense and intelligence.

Those who know me will admit readily that I am rarely silent, except that day at the National School Public Relations Association's national conference when some guiding power kept me from skipping Pat's presentation.

During the 20 years since, I have never missed one of his seminars or speeches. Years later, as director of communications for the Association of California School Administrators, I coaxed him to present at our annual conference. Never once has he been a disappointment. And never once has he failed to spur me on to do more better:

- I no sooner had struggled through the traditional barriers, redefined my role as one of management and been appointed the first woman on the superintendent's cabinet in a major school district when Patrick introduced communications theories about opinion leaders and new research that was triggering better ways to do things.
- When I designed and implemented a new program and even won awards following his logic and planning methods, he tickled my interest with talk of strategic planning and anticipating and tracking public opinion to better manage an organization's positioning as issues matured.
- No sooner had I started squinting years ahead for my clues to planning than he began to sprout marketing and targeting techniques related to value and life-style decision-making. He made all kinds of sense about customer relations as the driving force of every organization.
- Then there were the discussions about ethical procedures and practitioner licensing — never overlooking the importance of managing the reputation of our field and becoming accredited practitioners.

About 10 years ago, my boss and my staff became nervous whenever I talked about going to a conference. They figured I'd be coming back with another new only-way-to-go idea and start moving and shaking again. Until they got to hear Pat themselves. One by one they did over the years, and they received the same revving up that I had had.

In November of 1993 in Orlando, Florida, I joined my 20-year mentor as a member of the Public Relations Society of America's College of Fellows. The best part of the ceremony was that Patrick was there to shake my hand and say, "Well done!"

So had I finally caught up and arrived? Not on your life! The day after my induction, Pat dished out another presentation and sent me back to California to launch a new series of class lectures and to laud tirelessly to my students and my seminar audiences.

But don't take my word for his contributions to the practice and practitioners of public relations. Ask the thousands besides me who respect him as a leader within our discipline, who value him as a teacher and mentor and who are grateful that he publishes the weekly newsletter pr reporter that keeps us going between seminars.

Think of this confession the next time you toy with the idea of cutting a seminar. Just the right presenter could put an incredible spin on your career, too.

Pat Howlett is director of the public relations degree program at Golden Gate University in San Francisco. She is accredited by PRSA and NSPRA.

by Frank W. Lutz and Robert W. Fields

The Politics Of A School Bond Issue—Don't Rely On Invalid Myths

Two consultants help a board confront inoperable myths about school financial campaigns. Their advice about political realities, based on recent research, enables the board to conduct research that leads to a successful campaign to replace an aging high school.

The high school had been built with W.P.A. funds during the great depression. Today it was falling apart. The school board of Old Rural #13 School District (Old #13) had been told by officials in the state education agency that something had to be done to improve that school facility or the district would be merged with an adjacent district and Old #13 would be closed. As no state funds were provided in that state for school building, the cost of such a new facility was the sole responsibility of local school district.

The Old #13 board had proposed bond issues to the local voters three times. The voters had to approve the issuance of the bonds in a school bond election if the new building was to be built but each time the election had been defeated.

The board was at its wits end. Both the board and the superintendent believed that they had done everything they could to get voter approval. The community had been invited to public meetings where it was told of the need and asked to make suggestions regarding design and use of the proposed new facility. Only a few dozen citizens attended the meetings and the same few always asked the same challenging questions that had been answered. Each election had failed. It seemed impossible to the board that people could have been willing to build schools in the 1930s when 33% of the American work force was unemployed and now, in time of relative prosperity, they refused to provide even the very barest necessities in terms of school facilities.

The above was the situation when we — as experienced consultants — were asked to attend an Old #13 school board meeting. To add to the difficulties, a school board member election had just been held and one of the two incumbents running had been defeated. The new member had attended his first meeting just two weeks earlier. He had been elected by a fraction of the community who wanted the present superintendent removed and the rest of the board defeated also. The new member made it clear during the meeting that he saw little reason to be listening to these university people. After all, he had just been elected and knew what the people expected of him. Some of the group that elected him not only wanted to get rid of the superintendent but preferred that Old #13 be merged with some other district, any other district for that matter. Some of the group seemed to believe, erroneously to be sure, that if Old #13 no longer existed they would no longer have to pay school taxes. Surely they thought they would not have to pay for a new building.

At the end of the session, all of the board members (except for the new one) asked if we would help them make one last try to pass the bond issue and save the school district from being dissolved.

We agreed and, in our first planning meeting with board members, we attempted to debunk some cherished myths about school financial

issues in America.

We pointed out that a myth is neither a fiction or fact but a belief that is based on previous experience or history. The trouble is that a myth usually relates only part of the story, and important new data may make the myth invalid.

A certain myth may have been a good yardstick in the past. But in light of changing attitudes or circumstances, it can no longer serve as a reassurable guide or helpful way to solve a problem. In fact, such myths can be harmful as, when acted on, can cause a problem to continue rather than be resolved.

Myth 1. *This myth holds that voters who are retired, on fixed incomes, or who send their children to private or parochial schools will vote against school bond elections.*

The myth follows, or is based upon, what is called the "direct benefit" theory of economics. That theory suggests that individuals will only support public policy that provides them with some direct and personal benefit. Therefore, since older people do not have children in public schools, they are not now receiving any direct benefit and not likely to want to provide the necessary support necessary for high quality public schools.

Recent data collected at the Center for Policy Studies at East Texas State University suggest that these assumptions are much too general.[1,2]. The fact is that older voters and those who for whatever reason do not have children in public schools tend not to vote in school elections. They are what is termed "apathetic" voters. They simply are not interested enough to go to the polls and vote. They stay at home.

While some may be "alienated," they are not alienated as a group. Alienated votes are strongly predisposed *to vote against* the person, party, or issue which has alienated them. Older voters and those without children in public schools are not generally alienated from public education. In fact, they, like other American citizens, tend to believe that public education is an *important element* in the American democracy, deserves prudent support, and that "their" public schools are reasonably good.[3] That is to say that American voters tend to be predisposed *in favor of public schools* and need some reason to vote against them. Older voters and those without children in public schools are not block voters and are not predisposed against them.

Our data suggests that their votes in school bond elections can best be predicted by the same demographic descriptors (i.e., education, income, e.t.c.) as the general American public. However, old voters and those without children in public schools have little contact with public schools. Therefore, they tend to know little about schools except what they "read in the

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newspaper," and, therefore, tend not to bother — unless someone has a reason to stimulate them to be concerned enough to vote in school elections. For this reason, and based on myth #1, school administrators have tended to attempt to leave these voters alone, a kind of "let sleeping dogs lie" tactic.

But those people in a community who are organized and opposed to a bond election do not follow the advice of school administrators. Finding a group of unmotivated voters, those opposed to the bond election are only too eager to provide "misinformation-information," thus removing the "cross pressure,"[4] that would otherwise have kept the apathetic voters at home. Now these formally apathetic voters become a new group of potential NO voters when, with good information, they could have been YES voters.

Myth 2. *Common sense suggests that if you ask for too much money you risk losing the bond election.*[5]

Sometimes after losing a bond election and having lowered the requested amount, the next election passes. Thus is born the myth that voters defeat bond elections based on the amount requested. Our data say "not so!"[6]. There is no statistical relationship between the amount requested and the outcome of the election.

The major factor in winning or losing a bond election is the political "know how" of running the campaign, the information you supply, and the way your message is delivered.

Do the voters see the facilities requested as necessary and/or desirable? Have they been involved in the planning? Have you made the issue simple and understandable? Have you avoided other reasons for general voter dissatisfaction?

If the answers to these questions are yes, then the amount requested is not likely to affect the success of the bond election. Cutting needed or publicly desired parts of the facility plan in order to lower costs, or lowering the amount previously requested after you have lost may not help you pass the bond issue. The reason for the loss may be general or specific voter "dissatisfaction" with the local school policy, or insisting on some aspect not generally desire or thought to be not contributing to education. Carefully assess the reason for the loss before you jump to the conclusion that it was the amount requested that effected the defeat.

Myth 3. *General "homespun wisdom" suggest that to hold a bond election just after tax bills go out, or right after Christmas when bill are due, or during the summer when the "kids" are not in school may not be good "timing."*

Again our data fail to confirm this myth. We found no relationship between the month of the election and the outcome of the election.[7] The election must be held sometime. Set the date and run an effective political and public relations program based on good political theory.

Myth 4. *One is better off if the voter turnout is low, as such elections are more likely to pass than those where the turnout is relative high.*[8]

The fact is that in elections where bond issues lose the voter turnout is usually higher than the turnout in the last election that was won. Careful examination of those votes show that the YES votes tend to be the same in the losing election as was the case in the previous winning election, and the increase in votes is almost totally accounted for by an increase in NO votes over the negative votes cast in the last election that won.[9] This is likely due the turnout of voters who were previously in "cross pressure" as described above.

The data further suggest that future elections, where the amount of money requested remained the same, the turnout continued to increase until the bond issue passed. These increases are almost totally accounted for by YES votes, until the bond election finally passed.

This is a complicated matter. Like most complex phenomenon, the politics of public schools require a complex explanation. In such a manner this description accounts for voter behavior in school bond elections.

Political Theory and School Bond Elections

Prior to 1960, the major myth spawning the four myths discussed above held that politics and education were and should be separate. Three decades of research and publication in the politics of education have largely dispelled that myth. Major among the research lines in the politics of local schools is the work that falls under the general heading of the "Dissatisfaction Theory." This theory has been recently applied to programs of school/community relations and the related field of school public relations.[10]

That theory cannot be fully explored here. A brief overview will have to suffice.

The theory holds that in the American democracy and in the local governance of education, the American voter, by recognizing his/her right to vote, often chooses not to vote when they are relatively satisfied with the public policy. This does not translate into "happy with" or even "satisfied." The voter is simply not "dissatisfied enough" with public policy and the office holders who are the policy makers. Therefore, voter turnout in American elections is often relatively low.

Increased dissatisfaction, however, removes "apathy" and voter turnout increases, usually expressed in a vote against present policy and incumbents. As this theory applies to school bond elections, it underlies the "debunking" of the myths above and provides the foundation for the action we took to assist Old #13 in an attempt to pass its fourth bond election.

The Action Plan at Old #13.

The following are the steps we suggested and were taken by the board at Old #13.

1. A questionnaire was devised to collect information related to voter predisposition and predictors of voter behavior. These included questions regarding:
    a. Voter age
    b. Voter education level
    c. Time residing in community
    d. Children in school or about to be in school
    e. Whether or not the respondent was registered to vote
    f. Family income
    g. Respondent's previous voting behavior
    h. Usual sources of school information
    i. The respondent's attitudes toward Old #13
    j. General attitudes toward public education
2. Questionnaires were sent to every known resident in the district, by name, not "occupant."
3. Non-respondent data were collected and analyzed against respondent data.
4. Data were analyzed to provide answers to political questions such as:
    a. Who voted and who failed to vote in the last elections, by categories?
    b. How did parent voters vote?
    c. How did non-parents and those with children in non-public schools vote?
    d. How did older voters vote?
    e. Where were the YES votes, the NO votes?
    f. Where did these different publics get their information?
5. Groups predisposed to vote YES (and who could be motivated to vote) and those predisposed to vote NO (who could be placed in crosspressure) were identified.
6. Based on such group identification, we suggested specific types of information and media sources to be directed at specific publics.
7. A campaign was devised to reach these publics with various messages they would listen to and understand. Not all publics hear the

same message or obtain information from the same source.

8. A plan, including sufficient resources to carry it out, was set in place.

Knowledge Gained Based on the Survey

Based on the survey we found the following things about the situation in Old #13:

- Although there was considerable dissatisfaction in Old #13, a large and apathetic group of voters were relatively satisfied with the district. They had not voted in previous elections.
- Most of the voters who had not voted in previous election did not plan to vote in future bond elections. Many said, however, that if they did vote, they were predisposed to vote YES.
- The vast majority of the parents of public school children had not voted in previous elections and did not think they would vote in future elections. If they did, however, they said they would vote YES.
- Those who had voted NO said they would vote again in future bond elections and would vote NO again.
- If 75% of the parents who had children in Old #13 had voted their stated predisposition in the past election, the bond issue would have passed.
- Data from non-respondents suggested no deviation from respondent data.

How Did We Use This Information?

1. Specific public relations actions were devised for specific publics. The truth was ardently adhered to but the message and the medium were selected to appeal to the targeted public (i.e. parents of children attending the Old #13 schools).

2. The publics were divided into two groups: those generally predisposed to vote YES, and those generally predisposed to vote NO. We attempted, through the specific message, to relieve potential YES voters from crosspressure so they would get out and vote, and, on the other hand, to place potential NO voters in crosspressure so they would decide not to vote.

3. Lists of registered voters were prepared and labeled according to specific publics and predisposition.

4. Block coffees were organized to discuss the bond issue and neighbors invited neighbors to their homes to learn about the bond issue. There were in addition to a single town meeting to which general advertisements invited all

citizens.

5. Pole watchers were recruited to sit at the polls and check voters against registered voter lists.

6. Telephone banks were operated in the homes of private citizens to answer questions on election day and to call potential YES voters who had not yet voted.

7. Potential YES voters were offered rides to the polls and/or baby sitting services while they voted. The services were carried out by individual volunteer citizens operating from their private homes and using their private cars.

What Was the Result of This Political Strategy?

In the very simplest terms — the Old #13 bond issue was passed by a 3 to 1 majority. Twice as many voters voted in the election as had voted the previous time when the election had failed.

There has not been another bond election in the district since, so we cannot say if the voter turnout will return to its previous low turnout. We expect, baring new controversy, that it will. There has been no additional incumbent defeat, although some entrenched opposition to the superintendent remains.

Discussion

One swallow may not a summer make. But if one has returned to Cappastrono, can the others be far behind?

The above case has demonstrated that political theory does operate in public education and specifically in school bond elections. If one asks whether we have a sure "bag of tricks" to pass every and all bond elections, the answer is surely — no! Theory is not a bag of tricks. It provides a guide for action, a basis for administrative behavior. Conditions differ from political situation to political situation and school district to school district. Variables are subtlety different and interactive. Neither life nor politics is a sure thing. But "playing the game" based on a thorough "scouting report," and a real working knowledge to the game certainly enhances one's chances of winning.

Amateurs seldom win against professionals. Would a school superintendent risk building a facility from plans he/she drew or would the superintendent employ a certified architect? Every superintendent has a course in school facilities and some have some engineering background. Yet none would risk the liability of drawing their own plans.

Few superintendents have a course in politics of education. Yet most will risk a financial issue on their confidence in their own political acumen.

The least sought assistance in a school bond election is for political advice on how to pass an election. The fact is that most bond elections that fail do so because of political reasons, not architectural problems, lack of long range planning, or the failure to engage in a public relations campaign.

If you wish to pass your bond election, pay attention to the politics involved and if you are not sure of how that game is played, seek out some professional assistance.

The Old #13 Survey.

Below is a summary overview of the survey instrument used by the authors in the Old #13 district study.

Do you currently have children attending Old #13?

a. yes b. no

How many pre-school age children do you have living in your home who will be attending Old #13?

a. none
b. one
c. two
d. three or more

Have you had children who did attend but no longer attend Old #13?

a. yes b. no

How long have you lived in the Old #13 school district?

a. 0-2 years
b. 3-5 years
c. 6-10 years

d. more than 10 years

Now looking ahead — do you think that a year from now you (and your family living here) will be better off financially, or worse off, or just about the same as now?

a. much better off a year from now
b. better off a year from now
c. same
d. worse off a year from now
e. much worse off a year from now
f. don't know

My plan for the next bond election:

a. definitely will vote in the next bond election
b. probably will vote in the next bond election
c. don't know
d. probably won't vote in the next bond election
e. definitely won't vote in the next bond election

How did you vote in the last school bond election for the Old #13?

a. did not vote (Briefly, please explain why:

____
____
____
____

b. voted for the bond package
c. voted against the bond package
d. don't remember
e. was not eligible to vote in the Old #13

The following statements were five-point Likert scales, using strongly agree, agree somewhat, neither agree or disagree, disagree somewhat, or strongly disagree.

We must maintain the quality of education in the Old #13.
We need to keep a Old #13!
I am willing to pay what is required to keep the Old #13.
If it requires more taxes than we now pay to keep a Old #13, we should consolidate with some other ISD to keep the cost down.
Our kids and community would be better off if there were no Old #13.
I feel I am well informed about the policies of the Old #13.
I think there are too many frills and too much waste in the Old #13.
I am dissatisfied with some of the current school policies of the Old #13.
There is not enough concern over the three R's in the Old #13.
Schools are dealing as well as can be expected with social problems (teen pregnancy, drug abuse, etc.).
I am satisfied with the taxes in Old #13.
Public schools are very important to me.
I have a say in how Old #13 is being run.
The Old #13 is being run as well as it can be.
I don't care to have a say in how the Old #13 is run.
The Old #13 school board is running Old #13 schools as I think the schools should be run.
The Old #13 superintendent of schools is running Old #13 schools as I think they should be run.
If I don't like something about the Old #13, I can do something to change it.

Please circle the grade that you think our school deserves in each of the following areas:

instruction	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know
discipline	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know
availability of staff	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know
student recognition	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know
appearance of school	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know
friendliness of staff	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know
communication between school and home	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know
transportation	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know

From which of the following sources do you get personal information regarding Old #13 and how important is each as a source of information? Place a 1 next to your main source of information and so on through the list. Don't rank the sources that you don't use to get information about the schools. Please rank the following personal sources of information.

____ students
____ teachers
____ superintendent
____ other administrators
____ school board members
____ other school staff
____ parents of Old #13 students
____ friends (other than parents of Old #13 students)
____ other (Please specify)

Please rank the following media sources of information using the same procedure described in the previous item.

____ local newspaper
____ newsletters/flyers from the school
____ parent's organization
____ school board meeting
____ meetings with teachers
____ personal letters from the school

____ other (Please specify)

____

____

____

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Case Study

Just Playing Around—A Fascination With Computer Games Computes Trouble For A Technology Teacher

by James G. Matlock

Superintendent Dennis Chambers was perched uneasily behind his massive mahogany desk, staring sullenly at his computer screen as electronic neon fish danced before his eyes. Computer-generated sounds of oceanic life softly echoed throughout the office. How ironic that this hypnotizing sensory stimulation would represent the source of a stressful and troubling predicament. Technology, the trend and mechanics of the future, was also the culprit in Superintendent Chamber's complex problem involving staff, parents, and a school board member.

The culprit technology was the subject matter of teacher Tom Dinkins who was in his 12th year of teaching computer science at Prairie Rock Middle School. And Tom was entranced by the incredible sense of achievement he felt playing the popular action-oriented computer gas called Xylar. His heart would race furiously and his eyes sparkle with excitement at the mere thought of fighting another battle against the ferocious Nordic king to win the beautiful Dardania's hand. His seduction into game playing during the past few years had helped ease the stress related to teaching. After dealing with the constant demands of his students and the administration, Tom felt a tremendous need to escape into a more pleasing environment and his sanctuary was found in the world of computer games. What had started as a quick interlude, though, had quickly turned into a more passionate and enduring relationship. Tom's involvement with computer games soon spread into a fixation lasting more than eight hours a day. The majority of his playing at school occurred during his breaks, lunch, and some of his class time. Tom saw no harm in using classroom periods for his computer enjoyment since most of his lessons were self-paced. He never had any complaints from the students and they seemed to thrive in the relaxed environment.

> *After dealing with the constant demands of his students and the administrators, Tom felt a tremendous need to escape into his sanctuary — the world of computer games.*

Curriculum director Greta Fairfield considered herself a progressive, open-minded administrator, but she could not even begin to fathom Tom's methods of teaching. She had seen a variety of teaching styles throughout the district, but Tom's was the most frustrating to evaluate. He used no books and did not present any structured lessons; instead, he gave the students a task to work at independently. Most of their class time was spent playing computer games. Although his class had achieved impressive scores on the state computer skills test, filling the display case with various awards, Greta was still not convinced that these feats were due from Tom's efforts. After all, most of the students had computers at home and were probably provided instruction there.

Her efforts in talking with Tom about the matter were ineffective as he quickly dismissed her concerns, pointing out the state test scores as proof of his effectiveness and mentioning the school principal's positive appraisals. But Greta Fairfield felt an urgent need to take some kind of action. Otherwise, she believed, all the teachers might abandon the curriculum process and she had worked too hard for this position to have someone ruin her efforts. She hated to discuss staffing matters with his husband, Bob, but as a member of the school board, he had a right to know what was happening in the classroom.

> *Principal Cartel's realized goal of a union between the middle school and the community via the computer link was exciting the community as the new technology's advantage became apparent.*

As principal of Prairie Rock Middle School, Harriet Cartel was a content and happy woman. She had worked at Prairie Rock for 10 years and became principal three years ago. Her school usually achieved excellent reviews from state auditors and the community was satisfied with her administrative results. The gem of the school was the realization of Principal Cartel's goal of a union between school and community via computer link. Last month, the final touches were added so that every person in Prairie Rock can communicate with the middle school using computers stationed in homes or in public kiosks scattered throughout the community.

Teachers could now hold computer parent conferences while parents could retrieve a vast amount of information, including their children's assignments, health records, and current grade reports. Classroom management was fine-tuned to an electronic science with attendance taken at the classroom door using scanners similar to those in use at supermarkets. The information highway was fully available to the students as source material for science projects, math tutorials, and book reports. What amazed Principal Cartel, though, was how the community was swept up in the excitement of the new technology.

The favorite topic throughout the community was the technical revolution taking place in Prairie Rock. In face, the local newspaper's editor, Hallie Sweeny, was so taken with the activity that she contacted an editor of a national publication. That editor was interested in Prairie Rock Middle School's progress and was sending a reporter to visit the school. Principal Cartel looked forward to the publicity, and reminded herself to express her appreciation to Tom Dinkins for his technical help.

But first she had a parent waiting to meet with her. Mark Anderson had stopped by the school's office to speak with the principal about his stepson, Peter, who began attending the middle school after living with his father for several years. Mark had been worried about Peter's reaction to a new home and school environment at the beginning of the school year, and he wanted to compliment Principal Cartel for the school's efforts in helping with the transition. Peter was thriving at Prairie Rock Middle School, and his successes there carried over to his home environment. His self esteem was greatly improved by the care and concern of his computer teacher, Tom Dinkins. Peter reveled in his achievements in computer class, working hard every night on various projects and had expressed a desire to become a computer teacher "like Mr. Dinkins." His stepfather was delighted with this outcome and wanted to express his appreciation to Principal Cartel.

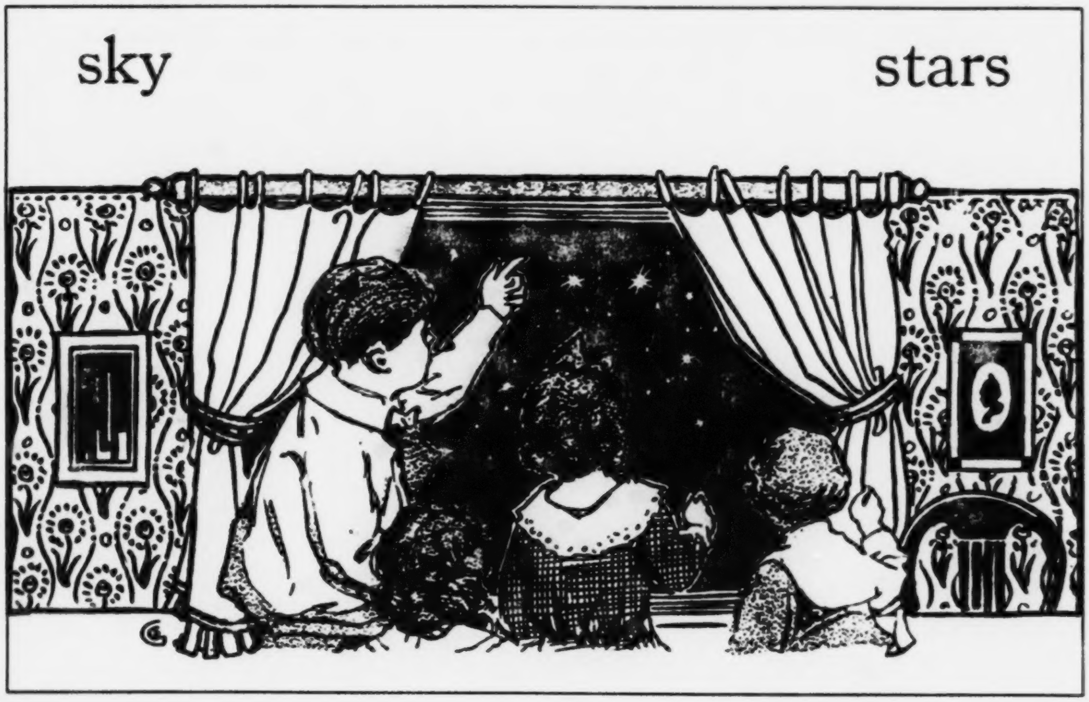
Harriet was quite pleased with Mark's positive comments about the school and Tim. It wasn't often that a parent would time the

The gem of the school was a computer link — every person in Prairie Rock can communicate with the middle school using computers stationed in homes or in public kiosks.

time to deliver praise in person. She immediately went to the classroom to give Tom his pat on the back. As usual, Tom was busy at his desk computer tapping on the keyboard. As much as she embraced technology, Principal Cartel could not understand the attraction that new computer games held for people. Both the students and their teacher seems enthralled by them, however, and Principal Cartel believed that Tom's ability to relate to his pupils was his most redeeming asset. His students appeared to thoroughly enjoy his class and they excelled with the material. Harriet wished that she had more teachers like Tom.

Meanwhile, another parent had quite different feelings about Tom Dinkins.

Barbara Collins' daughter, Charlene, had complained that she was bored with her computer class and wanted to change to an art class was ready to call the superintendent. Barbara was reluctant to allow even an elective class change in mid-year, but she was worried about her daughter's distress, and was ready to call the superintendent. It seems the teacher, Tom Dinkins, was too busy playing games on his computer to give the students the lessons they deserved. Charlene was an honors student and would not complain unless the situation was intolerable. And this was not the first complaint that she had heard about Tom. As president of the local parent group, she had listened to many members of the community as they voiced their objections to his long hair and



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the way he treated the students as though they were his friends rather than his charges. Some were wondering if Tom would ever grow up.

Barbara had also heard, through her other contacts in the community, that he never paid his dues to the local fire department and played loud music in his house at all hours. There were even rumors of his involvement with a local beautician when his wife had left him. Barbara believed that her best course of action would be to bring her concerns to the superintendent and ask him to rectify the situation. She was convinced that it would be in the best interest of the school if Tom was fired or at least reprimanded in some way.

> *Curriculum director Fairfield couldn't fathom Dinkins' computer science teaching methods — he used no books or structured lessons, giving students computer games to work at independently instead.*

Superintendent Chambers sat staring at his computer screen, the neon fish dancing unnoticed. He'd just finished with two stressful phone calls. School board member Bob Fairfield was the first caller, demanding the resignation of Tom Dinkins. Always with a quick temper, Bob blasted Superintendent Chambers for allowing taxpayer money to be wasted on a teacher who did not teach. He warned Chambers of possible repercussions on the next school board meeting if his demands were not met. Fairfield's call was followed by one from Barbara Collins. As president of the local parents group, she demanded to know why the school was allowing Tom Dinkins to work in the district and proceeded to relate every thing she had heard about the teacher through her connections.

Superintendent Chambers detested the gossipy quality of her delivery, but he was also aware that she wielded a great deal of influence on the community. Her complaint of Tom's negligence in his teaching duties seemed a harsh appraisal to him. From his experience and discussions with Principal Cartel, Tom appeared to be doing an outstanding job.

Superintendent Chambers called Cartel into his office and informed her of the complaints. Harriet was confused as well about the outcry, mentioning Marcia Anderson's visit and all the progress made at the school in regard to technology.

This left the superintendent stumped. He did not want to invoke the ire of a board member and the leader of a parents group, but he also knew that he would not fire Tom Dinkins. He needed a quick solution before this situation ballooned into a major showdown. If only the little neon fish could speak and give him the answer to his troubles; instead they mutely mirrored his thought patterns as the sound of the turf washed through the office.

James G. Matlock is a special education teacher at Caldwell Middle School in Caldwell, Texas.

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Case study and/or case study responses submitted for publication should be sent to Philip T. West, Professor of Educational Administration, Harrington Education Center, Room 222, Texas A&M, College Station, TX 77843-4226.

Response to Case Study in Vol. 17, No. 2

Case Study Response

Not Just Fun & Games

by Ronald D. Fox

In this case study, "A Fascination With Computer Games," Superintendent Dennis Chambers is facing a personnel dilemma at Prairie Rock Middle School requiring swift and immediate action. One of the district's seemingly most effective technology teachers, Tom Dinkins, has come under fire because of his non-traditional teaching methods. Three key persons — district curriculum director; Bob Fairfield, school board member Bob Fairfield, and parent organization president Barbara Collins — had separately voices their growing dissatisfaction with Dinkins to Superintendent Chambers, demanding that he take quick action.

The success of Dinkins' students proves that his style of teaching, which uses an environment where students feel comfortable to explore and experiment with hands-on activities, is effective. He has demonstrated through hard work, particularly in regards to the recently installed computer communication network, that he is truly dedicated to the district's improvement. Therefore, it seem obvious that it would be foolish for Superintendent Chambers to fire Dinkins.

The first step Chambers must take in addressing his dilemma is to have a meeting with Tom Dinkins and Harriet Cartel, the principal of Prairie Rock Middle School. At this meeting, Chambers should discuss the complaints about Tom and what can be done to resolve the situation. After voicing his support of Tom, he could suggest that the teacher curtail some of his computer game playing in the classroom class in deference to programs that exhibit a broad understanding of computer capabilities. At the same time, he could allow him to continue using his non-traditional style of teaching.

The second, most vital, step would be to assemble the three main opponents to Tom's teaching style for a demonstration in the classroom, followed by a discussion meeting. By observing first-hand what happens in Tom's classroom, they will see what and how the students are learning. The conference after the demonstration would include supportive testimonials by Principal Cartel, Mark Anderson, (a parent whose child has thrived in Tom's classroom), and a few of the students.

Taken together, these actions should lead to a positive outcome for both Superintendent Chambers and Tom Dinkins. By approaching the problem quickly and directly, Chambers will avoid a possible community uprising founded on gossip and rumors.

Ronald D. Fox is a graduate assistant in the educational administration department of Texas A&M University.

Book Reviews

by Arthur W. Steller

Books for review and requests to serve as a guest book reviewer may be sent to editor Arthur W. Steller, Deputy Superintendent of Boston Public Schools, 30 Carruth St., Boston, MA 02124.

Democratic Schools.

by Michael Apple and James Beane.
ASCD, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 1995, $14.95

As the next century approaches, education is engaged in a search for answers. Reform, restructuring, and even returns to the past are all recurrent themes in this quest. Apple and Bean's book attempts to direct readers towards the latter idea.

> "...and perhaps, we will begin to remember
> a now half-forgotten idea
> that was to guide the purpose and
> programs of our public schools.
> The idea was, and is, democracy."

Public schools have been the main contributors to the effectiveness of our democratic society. Yet, the meaning of democracy seems confused in society at large, and the role of schools in the development and continuance of democracy is even less clear. The authors understand this dilemma as they write: "We believe that bringing the meaning of democracy to light is critical at a time when many citizens are vigorously debating the future course of our schools."

Four stories about schools that the authors consider to be exemplars of democratic educational institutions are used as examples. The highlighted schools include the widely publicized Central Park East Secondary School of New York City; Rindge Vocational School of Cambridge, Mass. and La Escuele Fratney School in Milwaukee, Wisc.

Schools have traditionally taught the concept of citizenship to students, although the practice of democracy has often fallen short. In addition, "...those committed to creating democratic schools understand that doing so involves more than the education of the young.

Democratic schools are meant to be democratic places, so the idea of democracy also extends to the many roles that adults play in the schools."

This book should be used as a reference when the topic of democracy in school is discussed.

Reaching the Peak Performance Zone.

by Gerald Kushel.
AMACOM, a Division of American Management Assn., 135 W. 50th St., New York, NY 10020. 1994, $21.95

The task of education professionals would be much easier and more enjoyable if peak performance permeated the organization. In the opening words of the author, "Imagine an organization in which each person, from top to bottom, is a peak performer; an organization in which doing one's best is the norm. Imagine what you could accomplish. Imagine how much fun you'd have."

Most of us have experienced the special feeling that comes when you have done your best. The issue is how to experience that peak performace on a more regular basis and to have it become contagious with others. "Standard and substandard performers can sometimes be encouraged by extrinsic motivators like promotions, raises, or threats of being fired. However, peak performers work energetically because they want to, because they relish the challenge," according to Kushel. When this happens, everyone comes out ahead. Once a peak performance zone is established, the peak performers in that zone are not threatened by having the higher performance of one exceed that of the others. They enjoy teamwork and friendly competition. They know that as members of a peak performance team their own chances will come in due time. In the meantime, everyone benefits from everyone else's high performance.

In his study of 1,200 managers and executives, the author identifies only four percent as peak performers. He "... found that all these four-percenters had one thing in common: They each took total responsibility for their job performance and satisfaction, and their personal life satisfaction. That is the key, that is what separates peak performers from ordinary performers — taking total, 100 percent responsibility for themselves."

Reducing School Violence Through Conflict Resolution.

by David Johnson and Roger Johnson. ASCD, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 1995.

These authors are best known as proponents of cooperative learning. They have taken that knowledge and applied it to conflict resolution using both teacher-centered and student-oriented techniques. Educators who are familiar with cooperative learning will recognize much of the book's contents.

Most violence prevention programs are only a beginning, as there is little evidence to suggest that these efforts actually change behavior. The more comprehensive methods advocated here include most of the typical violence prevention programs with these components added:

- meet nurturing needs
- create a cooperative environment
- encourage positive and lasting relationships
- limit out-of-school time
- form partnerships with parents and community and
- provide long-term conflict resolution/peer mediation training to all students.

Students are actively engaged in conflict resolution via negotiations, mediation, and arbitration. The authors remind us that effective teachers use academic controversy to enhance learning, which bring us back to cooperative learning. The approaches outlined can be most effective within the school building as teachers and students are dynamic participants in this conflict resolution process. Readers are cautioned that this model is not a cure-all or quick fix. Habits and attitudes are not changed quickly or easily. Procedures must be taught and retaught with increasing complexity and sophistication so students can improve expertise. Competency takes years of practice.

It took 30 years to reduce smoking in the United States and 15 years to reduce drunk driving — reducing violence may take even longer.

Hope, Intolerance and Greed: A Reality Check for Teachers.

by Debra Anderson, Robert Major, and Richard Mitchell. Greenwood Publishing Group, 88 Post Rd., West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881. 1995, $49.95.

Teachers have the power to reverse the trend toward intolerance and greed because "Educators must never forget that they influence every lawmaker and every lawbreaker, and if they handle each in the right way, at the right time, changes lasting a lifetime can happen in an instant." Hope is the main message in this book and education is the source of that hope. Chapters include Hope, Optimism vs. Pessimism, Self-Concept: Creating Your Own Rainbows, Resilient Children, Teaching Nonviolence and America's Least Expensive, Most Powerful, Most Available Resource: Reading Aloud. The resilient children section could have been more inclusive since the literature in this area is growing and except for the last chapter, teachers are given more philosophical advice than day-to-day techniques. However, the basic strategies provide the foundation for teachers upon which they can build. And in addition, middle chapters on Greed, Ethics, Values, Morals, and Indifference emphasize the role model aspect of teaching, while the realities of our current society and the vital importance of professional development and curriculum work are treated in the first chapters.

Teachers, for the most part, would readily acknowledge their potential power in shaping society via the children they serve. This book's research and literature references will bring to the surface these understandings. For example, I was stuck anew with the idea that optimism may affect achievement more so than talent. Teachers are the key.

While written primarily for teachers and teacher educators, this book has valuable information for anyone who needs a rationale on why education should be supported.

Effective Succession Planning.

By William Rothwell. AMACOM, a Division of Management Assn., 135 W. 50th St., New York, NY 10020. 1994, $59.95.

School districts generally do not engaged in systematic planning for the replacement of leadership personnel. Yet, the survival of the public schools depends upon continuity of managerial talent. Other organizations have models which can be studied and emulated, and Rothwell has identified how such organizations handle succession planning. He has created a seven-pointed-star design as a model for personnel succession. The steps are:

- Make a commitment to systematic succession planning and establish a program.
- Assess present work requirements.
- Appraise individual job performance.
- Assess future work requirements.
- Assess individual potential and use 360° feedback.
- Close the developmental gap to meet succession planning needs.
- Evaluate the succession planning program.

The author cautions that succession planning should not be immediately preceded by major layoffs or downsizing. This is sage advice.

However, internal and external communications are not adequately addressed in this book for succession planning to be most successful. Communications officials could add significantly to the sound methodology in this volume.

Yet, this book is extremely practical with worksheets, forms and specific questions to guide the development of a blueprint for succession planning. And school administrators, especially those in large districts, could benefit from adapting this approach.

Marketing Communications: How to Avoid Myopia and Add Marketing Power to Your Publications.

By Robert Topor. Educational Catalyst Publication, Mountain View, CA. 1993, $33.95.

This book is classic Robert Topor. It is well written, logical land to the point, along with an entertaining storyline. This strength can be seen as a weakness by his regular readers, since the ideas here are a bit redundant with his other works, but most readers will either be unaware or overlook this slight blemish.

The focal point of Topor's recent writings is that mass audiences are outmoded. To effectively reach people in the '90s requires marketing to particular individuals. In his own words, Topor writes, "Once a school knows who its audiences are in sufficient detail to differentiate them, the marketing opportunities increase many fold. This concept of market segmentation, a basic marketing principle, is well covered in my other books."

In what is a difficult concept for many to accept, "Marketing communications is as much an exercise in subtraction as it is in identification and addition. For example, if may be most efficient to not target certain groups in direct mail if they have not responded before despite repeated past attempts. They may simply have to be written off as deadwood!"

This hardnosed approach espoused by Robert Topor is exactly what most school public relations officers need, but it's hard to convince others higher up in the organization to understand that all publications should not be addressed to all audiences, and that some parties should simply be avoided. School public relations will have reached new heights when these ideas become part of the reality.

by Robert J. Gerardi

HOW TO WRITE FOR PUBLICATION— DON'T HIDE YOUR KNOWLEDGE FROM OTHERS

In my undergraduate days and in my years in the classroom I fancied myself as being a math science specialist. I was never great in writing, and I don't particularly like to read if there is something more physical I can be doing.

When I assumed my first principalship, a colleague asked me to write an article for an upcoming issue of the State Elementary Principal's Journal. He even gave me the title, "A Bridge to the Future," or what would education be like 20 years down the road.

I went to my college library and read everything I could find that would help me develop this manuscript. I did put together an article that was published in the Journal. It was one page long and I invested 40 hours or more in preparing it!

The following year, the same person asked me to do another article, and I did it with about 20 hours of preparation. Later another colleague asked me to co-author some articles with him about a project we were working on, and it wasn't long before I could write one in an hour or two. Today a publishable article takes me about 30 minutes, and I have more than 300 published articles to my credit. That's not bad for someone who never thought he could write.

How do you get started? Think about the things you have done; the things that made you feel successful. If you can put one into a "how to" article, there is a great demand for this type of article and it will doubtless be published. Think about a current educational practice that you agree or disagree with. Write an opinion piece about this practice. It will probably get published.

Encourage someone you are working with to co-author an article with you about a common concern or interest. You can learn a lot by collaborating on a manuscript.

Look at your term papers, past and present, and you will find that with very little editing, many will be publishable! Block out an hour and begin writing. It may need to be rewritten several times, but the final product, when published, will make you feel proud.

Why should you publish? I did it at first because it made me feel good to see my name in print. It was a reward for a job well done, and I like the recognition it brought me when my contemporaries found and offered my congratulations. It enhanced my self-esteem. Since most educators don't publish, it looks great on a resume, and when I have interviewed for superintendencies, often board members will ask me about various articles I have published.

I've convinced my children to publish (three out of four are teachers), and whenever they interview, they tell me how impressed the principal or superintendent was with their publications. It gives you stature and sets you apart from the crowd. It makes you the memorable candidate.

Stop "hiding your light" under a bushel and start writing.

Where do you submit your manuscript for consideration? Go to your college library and look over their publications section. When you find one that you like, look at the articles. Are they short (one to two thousand words) or long (fifteen to twenty thousand words)? Are they more research- or opinion-oriented? Look for

manuscript style. On the Table of Contents page is often the address to send manuscripts or other concerns. Also be sure to speak to the librarian, who will be able to give you the names and addresses of thousands of journals, probably on a computer printout.

Publishers do not like authors to submit their manuscripts to more than one journal at a time. However, I have often sent mine out to many journals simultaneously, and if more than one wanted the article, I decided which one I want to publish it.

I have found editors to be very kind. There are universally helpful. When I receive a rejection with suggested revisions, I am delighted. I know they are interested in the content so all I have to do is follow their direction. I have never had a bad incident with an editor.

I have sent some manuscripts out to a hundred journals before one was accepted, and others have been accepted by the first journal I sent them to. Overall my acceptance rate is probably about 5%, i.e. 19 out of 20 reject my manuscript. But the one that does accept it makes my day.

Why aren't many K-12 educators motivated to write for publication? We've all heard that at the post-secondary level it's "Publish or Perish." Perhaps the answer is that at the K-12 level they are not particularly expected to, so they don't.

Most of the educators I have known in teaching, the principalship or the superintendency have been and are people of character, courageous and not afraid to stand up for what is right. However, I believe they doubt their own ability to write for publication, don't feel that what they have to say is important enough for publication, or don't see the rewards of having their manuscripts published. I frequently suggest to teaching and administrative colleagues that we cooperate on an article about a particular topic, but few take me up on it. But those that do bask in the accomplishment of that first article and usually go on to write many of their own.

The only thing preventing you from being a published author is your attitude. You do have something to say that is worthwhile. Make the time today to sit down and start writing and I guarantee the rewards will far outweigh the effort.

Robert J. Gerardi is superintendent of schools of School Administrative District 58, (R. R. #1, Box 1580, Kingfield, Maine 04947). He has been recognized by the editors of Executive Educator magazine as one of the top 100 school administrators in North America.

by Albert E. Holliday

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY—

Seven Intelligences of Gardner, Plus a Few Others

Below are descriptions of the seven intelligences identified by Harvard University researcher Howard Gardner, as printed in Our Children, the National PTA magazine of March/April 1996.

The Seven Intelligences

Below are descriptions of the seven intelligences outlined by Harvard University researcher Howard Gardner.

1. **Logical/mathematical intelligence** is used in situations requiring problem solving or meeting new challenges, as well as situations requiring pattern discernment and recognition.
2. **Intrapersonal intelligence** is used in situations requiring introspection, recognition of feelings, and spirituality.
3. **Interpersonal intelligence** is used in person-to-person encounters in which effective communication, working together with others for a common goal, and noticing distinctions among people are important.
4. **Musical/rhythmic intelligence** is used in responding to the effect of music and rhythm on the brain, including the human voice, sounds from nature, and percussion instruments.
5. **Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence** is used in physical movement in sports, dance, and exercise, as well as other expressions of self through the body.
6. **Visual/spatial intelligence** is used in creating and responding to unusual, delightful, and colorful designs, patterns, shapes, and pictures, as well as visualization and pretending exercises.
7. **Linguistic intelligence** is used in explaining, understanding, and remembering things with language.

NATIONAL PTA MAGAZINE

Here are six others that deserve minor consideration:

Nostalgia intelligence is used by older people who counsel youngsters starting with the phrase "When I was your age..."

Predictive intelligence is used, mainly by spouses, withthe statement "I told you so."

Counseling intelligence is used by peers who preface their comments, "Well, if you want my opinion," and then tell you whether or not you want it.

Tune-in intelligence is used by local television anchor people who enjoy interrupting a favorite evening show with grisly details of the latest tragedy and the warning "Detail at 11."

Warning intelligence is used by a parent with a child with the comment "Wait 'till your Mom (or Dad) gets home."

Cautious intelligence is used by traditionalists who respond to innovative ideas for school change with the response, "That program would never work here."

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Can Anyone Argue With These Values?

In a text by Butts, the obligations and rights of citizenship are suggested as follows:

Table 1: Principles of Constitutional Democracy

The Obligations of Citizenship	The Rights of Citizenship
Justice	Freedom
Equality	Diversity
Authority	Privacy
Participation	Due Process
Truth	Property
Patriotism	Human Rights

Source: Adapted from R. Freeman Butts, *The Morality of Democratic Citizenship: Goals for Civic Education in the Republic's Third Century* (Calabasas, Calif.: Center for Civic Education, 1988), 136.

Berliner: A Rising Tide of Achievement

David Berliner, co-author of *The Manufactured Crisis*, told attendees at a March meeting of AASA that American schools have been on a "rising tide of achievement" rather than one of mediocrity.

Ann Lewis, reporting on the AASA meeting, wrote in Leadership News (March 31):

- Many of the myths created by the critics of public education deal with declining academic achievement. Berliner, on the other hand, believes the academic performance of American students is a minor miracle, considering the increasing percentage of students who stay in high school and how much more difficult it is to teach today's students.
- Berliner blamed education "failure" myths on two sources. One, a conservative sweep in the 1980s that brought into political power those who want to privatize education. Two, an acquiescent press that doesn't ask questions.
- Berliner acknowledged that all is not rosy with American public education. "There are some awful school systems in the country," especially in the inner cities and some rural areas, he said, but refuted charges that illiteracy creates poverty. It is the other way around, he contended.

(David Berliner's detailed article, "11 Myths That Undermine Confidence in American Education," appeared in this *Journal*, Vol. 15, Number 2, December 1993. That edition is out of print. A photocopy of the article is available from the publisher for $5.00. Or, a reader can order it through University Microfilm, Ann Arbor.)

AASA Resolutions

Among the statements and resolutions adopted at this year's AASA annual meeting were these:

- There are societal and political groups that are attempting to destroy public education. Political rhetoric... is attempting to put racial, ethnic, gender, religious, age and socio-economic groups against one another.
- AASA encourages all school administrators to be advocates for parental and community support for public education.
- AASA strongly stands against divisiveness and negative rhetoric that undermine public education.
- AASA believes that many of today's elected officials...have disassociated themselves from the needs of children. This is evidenced through the decreased moral and financial support for programs that enhance the opportunities and welfare of children. We have become a "nation of crisis" regarding the condition of children.

Signs of the Time

The following report was circulated by the Associated Press in March of 1996:

A Catholic high school gave students a

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choice: remove the "pro-choice" stickers from your cars or don't come back to school.

Six students at Cardinal Mooney High School were found with the bumper stickers advocating abortion rights this week, and four of them immediately agreed to take them off. Two refused and were given daylong suspensions.

Help for the Learning Organization

If you want to know what a technology infrastructure is and can do for students, refer to a publication issued by the private Milton Hershey School. *Designing The Learning Organization* is a monograph based on presentations of six specialists at a recent Hershey-sponsored conference.

The publication costs $29.95. Order from the Hershey Communication Office, P. O. Box 830, Hershey, PA 17033. Fax: 717-534-3527. No purchase orders accepted.

Working With Community Groups Manual Offered

The Allegheny County Alliance for Public Schools has published a 60-page manual to working with community groups. It covers collaboration, focus groups, organizing, responding to criticism, marketing and handling hostile audiences, among other topics. Order from ACAPS, P. O. Box 99653, Pittsburgh, PA 15233. Fax: 412-279-7956. The price delivered is $15.95.

We Didn't Review This Book.

In an announcement about a new book from Greenwood Publishing of Westport, Ct., we came across this passage:

"Adopting a constructivist-developmental approach to learning, the authors identify endemic dilemmas that increasingly handicap industrial-era schools. A stagnant economy heightens tensions due to class, race, and gender inequities. Hierarchically structured corporations and representative politics perpetuate business dominations. Computers offer possibilities for more open communication, flexible organizations, and democratic discourse. Alternative visions of the future that engage students can renew cooperation, collaboration, and community in schools and society."

I think I know what the book is about. But I question if it will be a best-seller. The writing fog index must be at the post-doctoral level. The reference to a "constructivist-developmental approach" caught my attention in a negative sense. It is a new term that was not defined in a manner that I could understand readily.

In an age when we have a multitude of educational resources to choose from, a publisher needs to ensure that prospective purchasers (and editors) can comprehend the value of a particular text. This book appears to fail the "how can this publication help me" test.

Top 10 Changes

The top 10 changes affecting students since the 1960s, as identified by 1994 finalists in AASA's Superintendent of the Year program, are:

- More dysfunctional families.
- High tech influence.
- Threats of crime, violence, poverty.
- Increased diversity in communities.
- Influenced of mass media, especially through greater knowledge at an earlier age.
- Student questioning of authority and shunning of traditional values and responsibilities.
- Less sense of community in a hurry-up society.
- Demands of changing workplaces for higher levels of literacy.
- Pressure for new kinds of education to meet what we know about learning styles.
- Powerful peer influence on values.

Source: *How Students Have Changed*, American Association of School Administrators. Tel: (703) 528-0700.

Guidelines

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations

A refereed journal–scholarly articles by academic/higher education authorities are refereed by an international editorial review board. The *Journal* also accepts articles by practitioners and administrators in basic (K-12) education and journalists at large.

Scope

Articles are sought on topics such as internal communication and climate, employee motivation, parent involvement, partnerships, working with the news media, community participation, audits, surveying and polls, community service programs for students, communication training, advisory committees, volunteers, writing and speaking, publications, alumni associations, foundations, mentoring, photography, and related topics.

The overall goal of the *Journal* is to support efforts to enhance/foster student achievement and staff productivity, and to provide information to build public knowledge of the value and potential benefits of a sound basic education of our youth. We advocate the concept that the school public relations function must be based on fact and reality as compared to ideals and goals of educators and the community at large.

Style

Scholarly articles should be prepared following style guidelines of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association.

We prefer citations to be numbered sequentially in the text and then detailed following the article. An author can include references of related articles/book with address of publishers—in a separate list. We accept photographs, illustrations and tables as appropriate.

Submissions

- Submit four copies of a manuscript with a letter from the author(s).
- Articles should be 1,000 to 3,500 words in length.
- If produced on a computer, supply a disk, clearly labeled, in ASCII format, IBM format only, with the text copies.
- Include an abstract of the article and a two-three sentence credit for each author on a separate sheet.
- Advise if the article has been published or is being considered elsewhere.
- Queries for articles on specific topics are welcomed.
- SASE. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for reply to submissions or queries.
- Response to an article or a query is usually conveyed to an author within 60 days.

Address manuscripts and correspondence to Albert E. Holliday, Editor and Publisher, *Journal of Educational Relations*, Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657 (UPS address-1830 Walnut St., Camp Hill, PA 17011) 717-761-6620.

Previous *Journals* are available in microfilm from University Microfilm Int., 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Refer to *Journal of Educational Communications* (1975-83), *Journal of Educational Public Relations* (1984-95) and *Journal of Educational Relations* (1995-).

Design-A-Decal Program Stimulates Positives

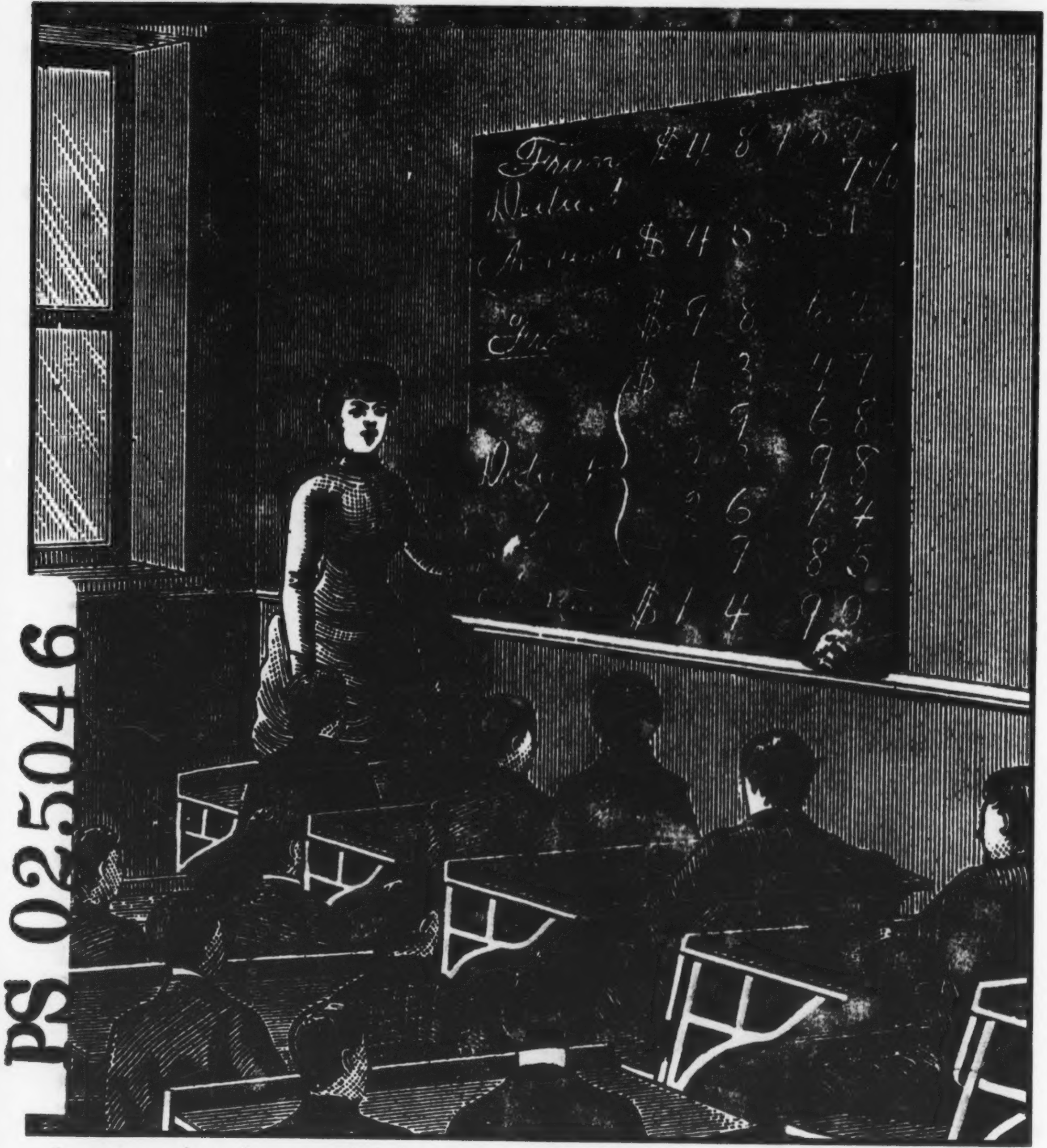
Two associations in Iowa sponsor an annual student art competition that is designed to promote positive communication among students, teachers and parents.

The Iowa State Education Association and Art Educators of Iowa cosponsor the competition. ISEA public relations specialist Bill Sherman says the winning artwork is reproduced on press apply decal sheets and sent to teachers. They use decals on student papers and on their notes to parents. Feedback has been quite positive, he says.

The associations issue certificates to students whose work is selected for use, and presentations of certificates generates local media coverage for students, their teachers and schools.

Contact Bill at the ISEA,
4025 Tonawanda, Des Moines, Iowa 50312.

The Journal of Educational RELATIONS



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Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships ✏ Vol. 17 No. 3

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Notes From the Editor

It Takes a Village To Make a School

Educators and school officials "still keep parents and the community at arm's length, despite the lessons of research and widespread acceptance of the idea of partnerships among schools, families and communities."

That is the conclusion of a policy report by Don Davies, co-director of the Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning in Boston.

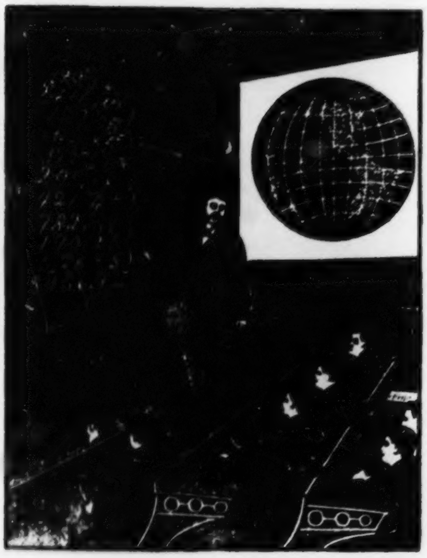
His report, Partnerships for School Success, contains the recommendation that school officials should adopt clear, written policies on family-community collaboration and back these policies with direct and specific programs and support. He also recommends that school officials "create action teams to bring parents and teachers together to identify and solve problems [that relate to a child's education]."

Seven of the nine key points in our own *Ultimate Guide to School-Community Relations* dealt with this issue. Promoting *partnerships; conducting polls and surveys; working* with *volunteers; senior citizens* and *advisory committees; parent involvement;* and *building coalitions/consensus* are all matters of human dynamics that fuel positive school-community relations that can enhance student achievement.

Public school administrators have a need to counter the misinformation provided by groups that would like to see tax funds diverted to private schools. (See the interview with Bruce Biddle in this issue.)

At the same time, officials need to review the way they go about conducting the business of schools. They must begin and support programs that involve parents and the community as ongoing partners.

That is a major step beyond the usual approach to public relations that encompasses an information program leading to public understanding and financial support.



Providing information is a first necessity to understanding. But real support, on a long-range basis, by citizens depends on how well we can build their helpful and continual relationships on behalf of students for their achievement.

Al Holliday
Editor & Publisher

The P*artnership for Student Success* report is $2.50. Order from Publication Dept., the Center, Johns Hopkins University, 3505 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218.

The Ultimate Guide, a *Journal* monograph, is $15, and can be ordered from the Journal, Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657.

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by Albert E. Holliday

99 WAYS TO INCREASE/IMPROVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Background of the 99 Ways

In the early 1970s, I was director of information for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Our office conducted a series of seminars around the state on ways boards and school staff could increase communication within a district, in schools, and in the community at large and with various segments of it.

We sought ideas from participants about specific ways, at different levels, that communication could be improved, and published a report with 99 of those ideas. The report had wide circulation in Pennsylvania and around the country in the mid-1970s.

Updating a 1970s list for the 1990s.

One of our Journal readers recently reminded me of that publication and asked if the list was still valid. For the most part, it is, except for seven areas of concern that have developed in the 1980s and '90s.

These are:

- Partnerships with businesses and other organizations on or off campus to benefit students.
- Mentors and programs for one-on-one student and even parent counseling and support.
- Senior citizen communications and involvement.
- Formation of alumni associations at schools (to identify role models or build financial support for a worthy project).
- Structured parent involvement programs, especially for at-risk students.
- Consideration of a marketing program, especially in suburban areas or locations where choice plans or charter schools are available to parents.
- Publication of statements of accountability, at least annually, as to the status of academic achievement, and school discipline/safety matters at each school.

Priority should be given to the seventh one. Coverage in national media from the late 1980s to date has been often negative about the quality of public education, in spite of evidence to the contrary*.

How can such a list be used?

That officials of any one district or school could implement all 99 of the suggested activities would be unrealistic.

However, many of them may be especially useful to consider to meet local needs or current problems.

Frequently, boards sponsor an annual retreat or study session for short-term evaluation and long-range planning. School staffs often meet to consider possible changes in operation and to set goals.

This list could be an agenda item when officials and staffs review how well they are meeting their responsibilities to communicate and relate to their many publics.

THE 99 WAYS

What A School Board Can Do:

- Set board policy on school-community relations and public information.
- Direct the superintendent to develop such a program.
- Budget for public relations—try one half of one percent of the operating budget.

** See the article, "Education's Present Myths Undermine Confidence in our Public Schools," by David C. Berliner in this Journal, Vol. 15, No. 2, or the book, The Manufactured Crisis, by Berliner and Bruce Biddle (Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1995).*

- Hold meetings in various schools in the community. Publicize in advance and ask for local media and PTA members representation at the meeting.
- Set a public speaking-out time at the first part of the board meetings.
- Make sure that each agenda is mailed to news media, officers of PTAs, and leading citizens.
- Ask that at least one representative from citizens' group, PTAs, student groups and other organizations sit in on board meetings on a regular basis.
- Develop a board accountability statement. Make accountability standards known to board members and the public.
- Hold a luncheon at least quarterly with editors and education reporters of the local media to provide them background information.
- Plan training programs for board members, especially new ones.
- Set aside half an hour at each meeting for a staff report on a new program. View it as in-service training for board members and the audience.
- Hold meetings at locations and times convenient for the public to attend.
- Provide adequate seating for visitors at board meetings. Install a sound system so everyone can hear the proceedings.
- Agree that only the board chairman can speak for the entire board. Individual members should be careful to indicate they can only speak as individuals.
- Appoint a short-term advisory committee to review the system's communication program yearly.
- Authorize the printing of a brochure that will describe the duties of the board, who the members are, when the board meets and how one can address the board.
- Allow students to elect representatives to attend as ex officio members (depending on state law) at board meetings.
- Structure informal gatherings so teachers can get to know members.
- Arrange for displays of student art in the boardroom.
- Present a "citizen-of-the-month" (and teacher and student) award for outstanding service or accomplishment for the district.
- Never recess an open board meeting to go into executive session. Hold such meetings at another time.
- Arrange for board meetings to be broadcast live (or video-tape them for later showing) over cable television.
- Put board members on the school system's speakers' bureau.
- Appear on local television and radio interview shows.
- Direct that a report on board action be sent to each staff member the day after meetings.
- Invite citizens with special talents to volun-

teer their time to lecture classes, provide demonstrations and speak at in-service meetings.

- Conduct public hearings on major issues—especially on new buildings and proposed budgets.
- Have board members attend PTA and community group meetings to meet and be accessible to people.
- Work with cable television companies to develop channels for local use.
- Authorize the staff to seek partnerships with businesses and community organizations to benefit students.
- Adopt guidelines for active involvement of parents at various levels and for specified purposed throughout the system.
- Publish, at least annually, a statement of accountability on how well the system is meeting standards of high academic quality and maintaining maximum safety and discipline requirements for each school.

What the superintendent can do:

- Organize a speakers' bureau composed of staff and board members to speak to PTAs and community groups.
- Install a hot-line or control telephone to answer questions from callers to check on possible trouble areas.
- Hold briefing sessions once or twice a year with bartenders and beauticians.
- Invite representative groups or parents to have an early morning breakfast at a local school once a week. Solicit their concerns, problems of their children and what suggestions they have to improve conditions.
- Hold brief seminars every six months with Realtors and real estate salespersons. Give them printed materials to distribute to new residents.
- Visit schools on a regular basis to talk with staff and students.
- Maintain a network of key communicators in each neighborhood to keep on top of local concerns and problems.
- Form student advisory committees to study problems and make recommendations.
- Publish a fact book containing administrators' and teachers' names, policies, locations of schools, and other information of value to parents. Publish similar booklets for teachers and students.
- Conduct human relations seminars for staff and students.
- Study the management styles of administrators. Counsel those who seem to possess "anti-humanistic" attitudes of relating to people.
- Provide news releases to newspapers, radio and television stations and community leaders.
- Send thank-you-grams to staff and students who go above and beyond the call of duty.
- Publish a staff newsletter weekly.
- Sit and eat with students in the cafeteria.
- Conduct surveys of citizens to learn of their thoughts about schools.
- Invite citizens into schools to observe programs.
- Conduct public tours of buildings on a periodic basis.
- Send birthday and other appropriate cards to members of the staff.
- Set up a bulletin board in each school and post laudatory materials (letters for jobs well done, newspaper stories, notices) on it.
- Teach for at least one class period each week.
- Meet with all staff members at least once a year.
- Make a slide show about a new program and make it available to community groups.
- Conduct a seminar on public relations for top administrators and teachers.
- Invite citizens and students to participate in teacher in-service training programs.
- Encourage community and student participation in curriculum planning.
- Send a one-page superintendent's newsletter to all employees each week.
- Recognize staff and student achievements at board and staff meetings.
- Sponsor a Toastmaster's club locally and encourage administrators and teachers to join to improve speaking skills.
- Conduct neighborhood seminars on problems of local interest.
- Be accessible at specified times to staff, stu-

dents, and parents to discuss problems, gripes, or suggestions.
- Work with principals and community groups to establish a cadre of qualified people who can serve as mentors to students in need of role models and personal attention.
- Develop two-way channels of communication with the senior citizen community and its leadership.
- Review results of community surveys about schools to learn their concerns and determine if a marketing campaign is necessary to properly represent the concerns of the public in their schools.

What principals and teachers can do:

- Maintain an open door to parents at all times.
- Make an inventory of the human resources in the school community. Invite parents with talents to lecture classes.
- Call the parents of every child in a class at least once a year to report on the child's progress.
- In elementary grades, send notes home once a month with at least one positive comment about each child.
- Serve on the system's communication advisory committee.
- Arrange displays of student art work in windows of local businesses.
- Reverse roles with students occasionally—teachers listen and students teach.
- Hold luncheon meetings with parents of young children in school cafeterias.
- Hold demonstration classes for parents and other citizens.
- Schedule meetings at times when it is convenient for both parents to attend them.
- Coordinate preparation of articles by students in the school's student newspaper.
- Conduct a "Meet the Press" session in class with the superintendent, the principal, a board member as guests and students as reporters.
- Switch classes with a nearby parochial or private school teacher once or twice a year.
- Assist students in a study of the functions of the school board.
- Request released time for home visits, conferences, and planning.
- Help student publish a class newspaper and send it home to parents.
- Attend at least two board meetings each year.
- Write articles about classroom activities for the weekly newspaper.

- Study classroom management styles—strive to seek a humanistic approach.
- Prepare a slide show on a classroom activity to show at a PTA meeting.
- Help students make a video of a play to show to parents.
- Assist high school students in setting up a tutoring service for other students.
- Participate in the system's speakers' bureau.
- Form a "innovative ideas" council of teachers.
- Set up a student achievement bulletin board to exhibit art work, letters, citations, etc.
- Arrange breakfasts with parents in the school cafeteria to discuss children's progress and parent reactions and suggestions.
- Appear on the school district's programs on the community's cable television system.
- Help students write and tape record a play, skit, or report for broadcast to the entire class.
- Urge the local radio station to prepare a student personality feature each week.
- Stimulate the administration to implement in-service programs and workshops on the role of teachers in public and human relations.
- Volunteer to switch duties for a day with an administrator or teacher.
- Give children opportunities to vote—after discussion and debate—on how or when they will do certain activities or what activities they will do.
- Consider forming an alumni association, through which former students can provide counsel and assistance to meet local needs.

What Do You Mean by School-Community Relations?

The usual definition of School PR (or School-Community Relations) 25 years ago had to do with providing information to citizens and parents so they would understand the need for public schools and support them financially.

Today, I suggest that a school PR or communication program has two components.

The first is the traditional political aspect—laying the foundation of understanding for staffing, facility, and curricular needs and building support to finance them.

The second is the relational aspect. This deals with the ways educators, parents, and others in the community work together to enhance the opportunities for students to achieve.

Building knowledge leading to financial support, in the first aspect, is essential for basic operation. Developing interrelationships in the school-community leading to a consensus on goals and methods are required for optimal operation of our schools.

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Albert E. Holliday has been the publisher and editor of the Journal of Educational Relations since its founding in 1975 (under the name Journal of Educational Communications).

by George Spiker and James T. Hardy

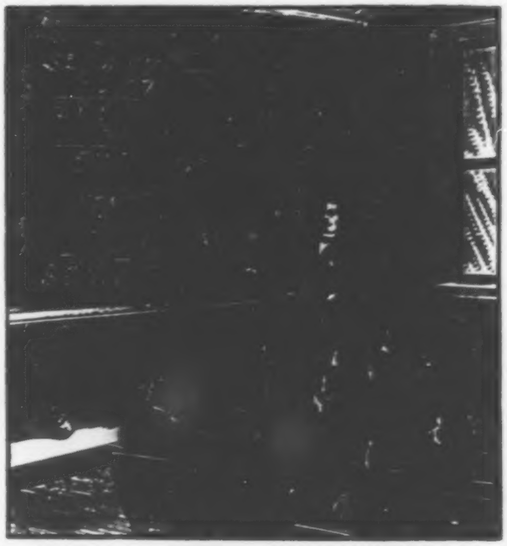
Teacher Attitude: A Key Factor in Parental Involvement

A study of 305 public school teachers in an Ohio county school district was conducted (Spiker, 1995) in an attempt to describe teachers' attitudes toward parental involvement in the schools. Comparisons were made among the teachers by grade level, educational background, age, parental status, years of service, and gender. The study was a partial replication of one carried out by Joseph E. Arsenault, Ed. D. (1991) with 205 Massachusetts pubic school teachers.

Elementary teachers exhibited generally more positive attitudes toward parental involvement when compared with their counterparts at the junior and high school levels, particularly with respect to parents seen as supporters of the school and parents as their children's tutors. A significant difference was found between teachers under the age of 30 compared with older teachers; between those teachers who were parents and those who were not; those trained in parental involvement compared with those who had no such training; and, between male and female teachers.

Sample

Elementary, junior, and senior high school teachers employed in the local school districts in an Ohio county system agreed to be subjects for this study. This county system was selected because it provided a population with a wide range of demographic characteristics. The 12 local school districts (41 elementary, 9 middle, 2 junior high, 2 junior-senior high, and 11 high schools) that made up the county system provided a full range of socioeconomic levels. Student enrollments in these districts ranged from under 1,000 to more than 6,000, providing a variety of administrative arrangements and student resources. There was a difference of more than $1,500 between districts with highest perpupil expenditure and those with the lowest.



At the time the study was carried out, 1,941 teachers were employed in the 12 local school districts. Of those, 647 teachers were selected by means of a stratified random sample for the study.

Instrument

Arsenault (1991) developed the teacher response form which was used in this study. The form consisted of demographic information about the teacher and statements designed to elicit responses regarding teacher attitudes toward:

- Parent and teacher relationships
- Parents as coequal decision makers in their children's education
- Parents' involvement as supporters of

the school program and who take an active part in it

- Parents as advocates for their children, i.e. serving as an activist or spokesperson on issues regarding school policies, services for children, or community concerns related to the schools
- Parents as an audience for school information
- Parents as tutors and
- Parents as learners in the schools

TEACHER SURVEY

These statements are about parent involvement in the school. For purposes of this study, parent involvement is defined as: The active participation of parents in both classroom/home learning activites and in school decision making.

Please circle the response that best represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

Strongly Agree SA	Agree A	No Opinion N	Disagree D	Strongly Disagree SD

1.	Active teacher participation in parent teacher organizations and parent advisory councils increases parent involvement in the groups.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2.	Parents do not have the necessary training to participate in school decision making.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3.	Parents are more likely to attend school programs and assemblies that involve their children.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.	Workshops to instruct parents in strategies to create home conditions for learning would improve student performance.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5.	Students like to have their parents volunteer in the school.	SA	A	N	D	SD
6.	Teachers would participate more in parent involvement activities if there was a parent involvement coordinator in the building.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7.	Teachers need in-service training in order to effectively involve parents in the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8.	Parents want teachers to provide them with ideas for helping children with school work at home.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9.	Many teachers appear to be uncomfortable about communicating with parents.	SA	A	N	D	SD
10.	Parents should participate in the screening and interviewing of new teacher applicants.	SA	A	N	D	SD
11.	Parents attendance at school events has no effect on student performance.	SA	A	N	D	SD
12.	Workshops for parents on ways to build skills in parenting should be provided by the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
13.	Parent volunteers in the schools are most effectively utilized in nonclassroom areas (i.e. library, office, playground).	SA	A	N	D	SD

(continued on page 10)

Parent/Teacher Relationships

There were no significant differences in attitude among elementary, junior, and senior high school teachers regarding parent/teacher relationships in the school. The three groups were in close agreement that parents want more information sent home about classroom instruction. The greatest range in the responses among the three groups had to do with opportunities for parents and teachers to talk with each other. Over half of the elementary teachers said that there were not enough opportunities; 68.9% of the junior high and 72.8% of the high school teachers agreed. Agreement was progressively stronger moving down the grade levels that active teacher participation in parent/teacher organizations and parent advisory councils increased parental involvement in these groups, and that parents usually cooperate with teachers to solve problems that students experience during the school year.

Parents as Coequal Decision Makers

All three groups generally opposed parent involvement in decision-making roles. Teachers from the various levels were extremely close in their level of agreement as to whether or not parents should have a role in setting promotion and retention standards for students. Over half (57.8%) of the elementary teachers did not agree; 64.4% of the junior high, and 63.7% of high school teachers did not agree.

The greatest range of responses occurred in reference to the issue of parental involvement in setting goals for their children's school.

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TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS

Respondent Demographics

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Males	93	30.8
Female	209	69.2
Educational Level		
Bachelor's	56	18.3
Bachelor's + 30	82	27.2
Master's	106	35.2
Master's + 30	57	18.9
Doctorate	1	0.3
Have Children		
Yes	231	76.5
No	71	23.5
Experience		
1-11 Years	74	24.5
12-16 Years	52	17.2
17-20 Years	60	19.9
Grade Level		
Elementary	155	51.2
Junior High	45	14.8
High School	103	34.0
Age		
21 - 30	30	10.0
31 - 40	59	19.7
41 - 50	154	51.3
51 - above	57	19.0
Training in Parental Involvement		
Yes	96	31.8
No	206	68.2

Whereas 83.5% of high school teachers and 81.7% of elementary teachers agreed that parents should be involved in this manner, only 71.2% of junior high teachers agreed. Agreement was progressively weaker up the grade levels for involvement of parents in establishing guidelines for grading students and participation in the evaluation process of their child's teachers. No junior high teacher agreed that parents should participate in the screening and interview of new teacher applicants. Very few elementary or high school teachers agreed with this concept.

Parents as Supporters of the School

Although the respondents among the three groups recorded similar attitudes of agreement about parents having the time to volunteer in the schools, there were several areas of sharp disagreement. Support for the idea that students like to have their parents volunteer in the school grew progressively weaker as the grade level increased. Almost all (90.3%) of elementary teachers agreed. Only 60% of the junior high and 59.8% of high school teachers agreed. One fourth (25.8%) of the elementary teachers agreed that parent volunteers in the school are most effective when used in nonclassroom areas. Junior and high school teachers were much more in agreement with this limitation.

A large majority of the elementary teachers (72.6%) disagreed with the statement that parents feel that their children do not want them to volunteer in the schools. Only 33.3% of the junior high and 31.7% of the high school teachers disagreed with the statement. Another major disagreement among levels was recorded regarding the statement that parents were more willing to volunteer in a school where training is available. Whereas a majority of elementary teachers (51.3%) and high school teachers (55.3%) agreed, only 37.7% of the junior high teachers agreed.

Parents as Advocates for Children

Elementary (95.4%), junior high (94.3%), and senior high school (95.1%) teachers were in strong agreement that parents need to become more active in supporting education. Agreement that parents should be involved with conducting public relations activities in the community and that parents who are involved in the school should become more supportive of education grew stronger as the grade level increased. *The greatest differences came with respect to level of agreement with the*

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SA	A	N	D	SD

14.	Parents should be involved in the placement of their children with specific teachers.	SA	A	N	D	SD
15.	Teacher training in effective parent involvement strategies is not necessary.	SA	A	N	D	SD
16.	Parent involvement in home learning activities makes no difference in student performance.	SA	A	N	D	SD
17.	Parents appear to be comfortable when they come to the school for a visit.	SA	A	N	D	SD
18.	Parents should be involved with establishing guidelines for grading students.	SA	A	N	D	SD
19.	Parents should be involved with setting goals for their children's school.	SA	A	N	D	SD
20.	School programs (i.e. concerts, plays, science fairs etc.) are a valuable resource for good public relations with the community.	SA	A	N	D	SD
21.	Teachers should design workshops to help parents understand their children's education at each grade level.	SA	A	N	D	SD
22.	Most parents do not have the time to volunteer in the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
23.	Parents should be involved with conducting public relations activities in the community.	SA	A	N	D	SD
24.	College students in teacher preparation programs should be trained in strategies for working effectively with parents.	SA	A	N	D	SD
25.	Most parents already know how to help students with school work at home.	SA	A	N	D	SD
26.	There are not enough opportunities for parents and teachers to talk.	SA	A	N	D	SD
27.	Parents should be involved with curriculum development.	SA	A	N	D	SD
28.	Parents would attend more school programs if they were scheduled in the evening.	SA	A	N	D	SD
29.	Discussion groups between teachers and parents on educational issues would increase parent support for the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
30.	Parents feel that their children do not want them to volunteer in the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
31.	Parents are more willing to volunteer in a school where training is available.	SA	A	N	D	SD
32.	Parents should be encouraged to observe instructional activities in their child's classroom.	SA	A	N	D	SD
33.	Most teachers want in-service training in effective parent involvement activities.	SA	A	N	D	SD
34.	Parents should participate in the evaluaation process of their child's teachers.	SA	A	N	D	SD
35.	Parents usually cooperate with teachers to solve problems that students experience during the school year.	SA	A	N	D	SD

(continued on page 12)

attitude that parental involvement in the schools is the responsibility of the parents to initiate and sustain, not the school. More than half (60.1%) of elementary teachers and 57.8% of junior high teachers agreed, compared with 77.4% of high school teachers.

Parents as Tutors

The study data indicated that there were significant differences among the groups in attitude toward parents assisting students with school work at home. A comparison between grade level groups indicated that the elementary teacher responses were significantly different from those of the high school teachers. *Elementary teachers were more positive in their support of parents as tutors than junior high or high school teachers.*

Closest agreement among the levels came with respect to the attitude that parent involvement in home learning activities makes no difference in student performance. Almost all (96.1%) of elementary, 88.9% of junior high, and 94.2% of the high school teachers disagreed. There was steadily decreasing agreement up the grade levels with the statement that parents want teachers to provide them with ideas for helping children with school work at home. The greatest differences between elementary and other levels were in degree of agreement whether or not teachers should provide specific activities that

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parents and students could do together to improve school work and grades. *While 81.8% of elementary teachers agreed that they should, only 55.5% of junior high and 66.6% of high school teachers agreed.*

Parents as Audience in the Schools

Parents as an audience include those roles where parents receive information about their children's progress and attend programs in the school. These activities usually involve the parent as a passive recipient of information.

Respondents were nearly unanimous in their agreement that parents are more likely to attend school programs that involve their children. Even the most diverse attitudes were quite close in comparison. Over three fourths (87.7%) of elementary, 91.1% of junior high, and 93.5% of high school teachers agreed that it is incorrect to say that parent attendance at school events has no effect on student performance. The weakest support, which lessened as grade levels increased, was for the idea that parents would attend more school programs if they were scheduled in the evening. All junior high teachers agreed that school programs are valuable resources for public relations with the community.

Parents as Learners

The teacher groups were nearly identical in their degree of agreement with the notion of encouraging parents to observe instructional activities in their children's classrooms. Moving up the grade levels there was an increased belief that discussion groups between teachers and parents on educational issues would increase parental support for the school. But, the level of agreement decreased over the same groups with respect to location of parent information centers in the schools.

Findings Related to Respondent Demographics

Training

The level of professional training of the teachers did not appear to have any relationship with the attitudes expressed by the teachers regarding parental involvement.

Age

As to teachers' age, the study found significant differences among teachers regarding parents as advocates. The teachers in the 21 to 30 age group were significantly less supportive of parents as advocates than were any of the other age groups. An analysis of the survey responses in this category suggested that younger, less experienced teachers may be less sure of themselves and, therefore, less eager to support those parents who might act as advocates for their children.

Teachers with children

Significant differences were found between the attitudes of teachers who were parents and those who were not with respect to parents as supporters and advocates. One implication might be that teachers with children may be more likely to support parent involvement activities of the school because it is the focus of their professional life and the fact that they have had to act as an advocate for their children as well as others in the past.

The study also found significant differences between the attitudes expressed by teachers with children compared with those without with respect to the role of parents as audience. This appears to be the result of teachers as parents having had the unique experience of seeing their own children perform and achieve. Therefore, teachers with children should be more likely to relate to the audience role than those without.

Highlights of this study:

- *Teachers under the age of 30 are less supportative of parents as advocates for their children than older teachers.*
- *Teachers who have had children are more likely to support the school's parent involvement activities.*
- *Educational leaders in a school should see to it that active parent involvement activities exist, and be open to projects that parents might initiate.*

Strongly Agree SA · **Agree A** · **No Opinion N** · **Disagree D** · **Strongly Disagree SD**

36.	Parents should supervise their children's homework.	SA	A	N	D	SD
37.	Teachers should encourage parents to attend school programs.	SA	A	N	D	SD
38.	Parents want more information sent home about classroom instruction.	SA	A	N	D	SD
39.	Parents should conduct fund raising activities to support school needs.	SA	A	N	D	SD
40.	Teachers should provide specific activities that parents and students can do together to improve school work and grades.	SA	A	N	D	SD
41.	Parents need to become more active in supporting education (i.e. attending board meetings and voting to support school budget).	SA	A	N	D	SD
42.	Parent involvement in the schools is the responsibility of the parents.	SA	A	N	D	SD
43.	Parent information centers (equipped with magazines, videos, etc.) should be located in the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
44.	Parents should chaperone field trips.	SA	A	N	D	SD
45.	Most parents are aware of their rights in the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
46.	Teachers should encourage parents to become volunteers.	SA	A	N	D	SD
47.	Parents who are involved in the school become more supportive of education.	SA	A	N	D	SD
48.	Many parents do not get involved in education because they have lost confidence in the schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
49.	Parents should have a role in setting promotion and retention standards for students.	SA	A	N	D	SD
50.	Parents should be involved with identifying community resources for the school.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Conclusions

It is apparent that faculty demographics have a strong relationship with teachers' degree of openness to parental involvement in the schools. School leaders need to take these variables into consideration when attempting to initiate and/or improve parental involvement in significant ways.

Teachers need to understand and appreciate that most parents want to be involved in their child's school and on a level that is more than just encouraging their children's success in school. The school faculty and administration must make activities available in which parents can participate in a helpful manner. The educational leaders in the school should see to it that such activities exist and, at the same time, be open to projects that parents might initiate.

A Program of Options for Parent Involvement

The following are possible activities that should be considered to stimulate parent involvement.

Volunteer Programs

Parents can be a valuable resource to the school, especially for a the school that lacks some of the personnel, resources, or time to organize and carry out the kinds of activities that add to a school's effectiveness. Someone in the school should be appointed who can encourage and coordinate such volunteer activities.

Parent Workshops

Teachers might consider offering workshops for parents that focus on parenting skills. Planners can use the expertise of the school's own staff as well as those of community social service agencies. Parents could be surveyed in advance to determine their specific interests.

Curriculum Handbooks and TakeHome Resource Materials

The school staff might create a parent handbook that sets out the curriculum and skills that students are expected to learn at each grade level. A calendar of studies could be provided parents so that they could anticipate at what time of the year their children would be experiencing certain topics.

The school could have supplementary materials and videotapes on hand which would be available to parents to check out and to use at home with their children.

Home Visits

Teachers should be encouraged to make

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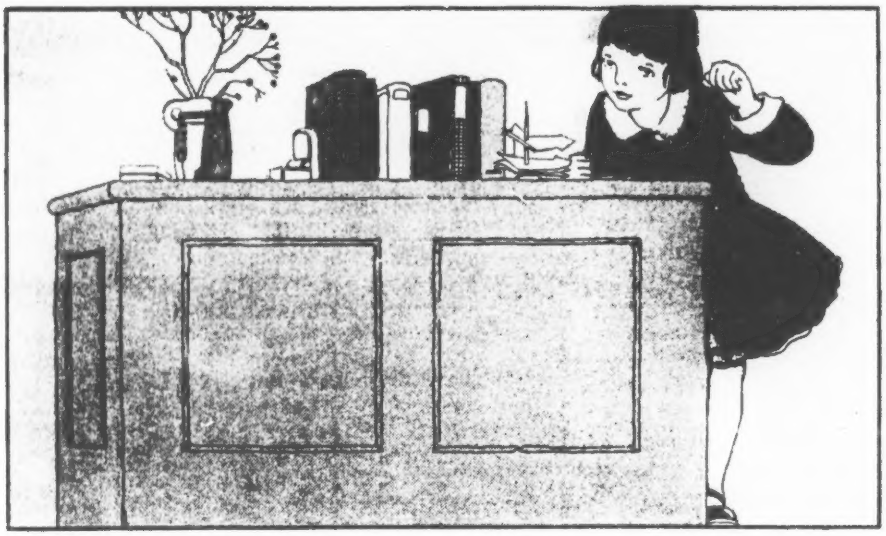

home visits prior to the first day of school. This personal contact could be maintained throughout the school year so that a constructive relationship might be established with the parents. The contact might provide parents with the sense that they are a vital part of the school community.

Parents could be invited to host small group meetings on important topics in their homes.

School Visits

Schools could develop a process that parents will feel comfortable using, one which announces that the school is open to and enthusiastic about receiving communication from parents. This includes school visits.

Open House

Some schools now hold their open house the week before school starts rather than a few weeks into the school year. Invitations go out to parents followed by a phone call to tell the parents how important it is that they attend.

Student Recognition

The staff should create as many ways as possible to reward and recognize the students. Parents feel honored when their children are honored. The staff could host a breakfast each semester, for example, for students with a high academic average or students who do volunteer work in the community and their parents.

Parent/Tutor Group

Parents could be asked to sign up to be tutors for groups of students. Parents with an interest in science, mathematics, English or social studies would have an opportunity to review the lessons for the upcoming week by mail. The tutor sessions could take place on designated evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., for example. Otherwise, parent/tutors whose schedule would allow could make themselves available during the school day.

A parentchild reading program for the elementary grades could take place throughout the school year. This reading program could be explained at organizational meetings in the fall.

Homework Helpline

Parents could be invited to tutor on the telephone to help students who are out of school because of illness, for example. This service could be offered the same evenings and at the same times as the tutor sessions described above.

Parent/Teacher Helper Organization

Parents who would like to play a larger role in their child's school life could sign up as a teacher aide. Parents could serve as chaperones, lunch and recess monitors, paper graders, and simply where they need answers.

Announcement/Awareness

School districts or schools could send out a monthly newsletter informing parents of school happenings. A calendar could be attached. Cable television could serve as an outlet for information. Upcoming events could be highlighted on the Community Bulletin Board. Radio spots, advertisements in the local papers, and store front signs throughout the community could also serve to inform the public as well as computer bulletin boards for those who subscribe.

A Proposed School Policy on Parental Involvement in Decision Making

The following is intended as a sample policy that a rural or suburban school district much like those in *the study might use to define the roles parents might play in decision making.*

The Board of Education shall annually appoint a District Parent Advisory Committee composed of three parents of students in elementary, three in junior high, and three in the high school grades. The duties of this committee will be:
1. To conduct an annual review of district goal statements and to recommend any changes to the Board of Education;
2. To serve as the initial screening committee for district level administrative candidates under the direction of the district superintendent or other agent appointed by the Board of Education. Candidates endorsed by this group must be considered among those advancing to the next review level established by the Board.

Parent Involvement Research

Ann Henderson (1987) has summed up the research on parental involvement this way:

- The family provides the primary educational environment.
- Involving parents in their children's education improves student achievement.
- Parent involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, long lasting, and well planned.
- The benefits are not confined to early childhood or the elementary level; there are strong effects from involving parents continuously throughout high school.
- Involving parents in their own children's education at home is not enough. To ensure the quality of schools as institutions serving the community, parents must be involved at all levels in the school.
- Children from low income and minority families have the most to gain when schools involve parents.
- Parents do not have to be well educated to help.
- One cannot look at the school and home in isolation from one another; one must see how they interconnect with each other.

Similarly, each school building principal shall develop a Building Parent Advisory Committee of not less than five members by midSeptember of each school year. The duties of the Building Parent Advisory Committee will be
1. To participate in an annual review of building vision and goal statements with an equal number of teacher representatives and to develop consensus recommendations for statement additions and changes;
2. To be involved as partners in the review of textbook selections under the leadership of a district curriculum consultant;
3. To annually prepare recommendations to the building principal regarding the building code of conduct;
4. To consult with the building principal regarding the student code of conduct and its application in the school.

The Board of Education, meanwhile, maintains its legal obligations to determine financial allocations, hire and assign personnel, adopt and procure textbooks, etc. Building staffs will maintain their responsibility for implementing expectations of the Board, developing procedures for the delivery of the curriculum, maintaining discipline and managing classrooms.

Members of these committees will be expected to take at least 20 clock hours total of training annually in areas including district operations, school finance, school and community relations, curriculum, pertinent school law; and applicable state and federal standards. District administrative personnel will be responsible for providing and/or acquiring such training for committee members. Some of the training may be appropriate to both district and building committees A parent may serve on no more than two district or building committees at the same time.

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This article represents a summary of the research carried out by Dr. Spiker under the direction of Dr. Hardy.

by Barry N. Dalton

IS THE DECAY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FACT OR MYTH?

An Interview with Bruce Biddle, co-author or *The Manufactured Crisis*

The phrase "A Nation at Risk" entered America's consciousness in 1983 when a report by that name was published, which supposedly exposed a growing crisis in the nation's educational system. Commissioned by the Reagan Administration, the report asserted that our schools were failing and that our students were lagging behind the children of other countries. Many more such charges soon followed from other government, industry and media sources, and the impression they left still prevails today.

In a new book, "The Manufactured Crisis" (Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1995), Dr. David Berliner and Dr. Bruce Biddle used facts, figures and good old-fashioned outrage to argue that America's schools are in many cases the envy of the world.

Berliner, a professor of psychology and curriculum/instruction at Arizona State University, received the National Education Association's highest honor in 1994. Biddle, a professor of psychology and sociology at the University of Missouri-Columbia, is also director of the university's Center for Research and Social Policy and editor of "Social Psychology of Education."

Biddle took a few moments to answer some questions about his controversial book.

Q Your book has been heralded by many leaders in public education. Why have so many responded so positively?

A Dave Berliner and I have certainly been flattered by educators' positive responses to *The Manufactured Crisis*. We suspect that this reaction reflects two causes: our book brings a message of relief and hope to hardworking and dedicated people who have been unfairly scapegoated by powerful voices for the past 15 years; and the fact that we tried to package this message in an accessible and attractive style.

Q Your book also has its critics. Has your book been reviewed fairly?

A We would have to give a mixed answer. Most reviews in scholarly sources have yet to appear. Some reviews in trade and popular sources have been fair and flattering. See, for example, this March's *Better Homes and Gardens*. In contrast, those appearing in the *New York Times, Washington Post* and *Newsweek* have been superficial or reflected a slant that was being pushed by the reviewer. Other reviews have condemned us for the messages that did not appear in our book, and still others have constituted hostile diatribes that so misrepresented what we wrote that we were probably lucky that reviewers got our names and the title of our book right. We have been quite startled by the latter reactions, but we should have anticipated them since one of the strongest messages of our book is that powerful people, whom we name, have recently been telling lies about American education.

Q You take issue with the claim that foreign education systems, particularly Japan's, are outperforming American schools. Where would you rank America's schools in comparison with others in the world?

A If one goes by the evidence, this question cannot be answered today. It is very difficult to conduct good comparative studies of student achievement, and much of the research so far reported has had serious flaws and has not focused on strengths of American schools. We

discussed these issues in detail in our book. However, because Americans have been told repeatedly by some political leaders that our schools do not look good when compared with those of other countries, such as Japan, and because the press often fails to report comparative studies in which American schools have been found to excel, so many people have come to believe this groundless message. American education has some obvious and impressive strengths—among others, our country offers a much broader range of curricula than do other nations. We service a wider range of students representing many different ethnic groups and levels of competence in our schools. And we enroll and graduate a much larger proportion of young people from our colleges and universities. These strengths are well-known in the international community, and in many ways America's education system has been the envy of the world for years.

Q You wrote that the press is partly to blame for reporting anti-education rhetoric as fact. But many of the critics of education attack the press as well. How do you explain that?

A Right-wing politicians have certainly attacked the press from time to time, but I'm not certain that recent critics of education have joined in this chorus. As a rule, the press seems to delight in telling horror stories about schools but avoids good news about American education. We were not the first authors to have observed this imbalance.

Q Much of your book blames various political groups, especially arch conservatives, for the false perceptions about public education. Are you worried that your book will be dismissed as political?

A Various critics have already tried to dismiss our book as a political "diatribe," but I suppose that is the price one must pay for writing a work that is controversial. Fortunately, a lot of people have also begun to read it and have discovered that it is thoroughly grounded in evidence.

Q You speak about the many myths that have been manufactured by critics of public education. Of all of the negative myths, which one stands out as the most damaging?

A Several of the myths have actually created a great deal of mischief, among them: that American school achievements have fallen seriously during the past generation; that American schools always fail in comparison with schools in other countries; that additional investments in public schools are wasted; that American education is somehow responsible for problems in American industries; that our society needs to generate a lot more scientists, mathematicians and engineers; and that private schools outperform public schools when dealing with equivalent students. None of these ideas can be supported with evidence, and each of them is now driving a number of unwise proposals for the "reform" of education.

> *Powerful people, whom we name, have recently been telling lies about American education. As a rule, the press seems to delight in telling horror stories about schools but avoids good news about American education.*

Q You point out that many problems arose for public education in the 1970s, which set the state for this "manufactured crisis"—and you admit that education has its share of problems today. How do we distinguish between the facts and the myths?

A By all means, the best way to distinguish fact from fiction is to look at the applicable evidence—using reputable sources, such as our book, in which that evidence is actually displayed. But if one does not have time to look at the evidence, or if the evidence is weak or missing, a couple of principles may help to sort out the issues. As a rule, our schools are more likely to be the victims rather than the sources of America's escalating social problems. And the difficulties encountered in our schools are unlikely to be caused by the supposed shortcomings of educators, students and other persons directly involved with education.

Q What are the most significant facts you can point to about the successes that the American education system is having?

A Perhaps the most significant fact to ponder about the successes of our schools concerns their ability to meet the serious and escalating social problems of our society that are much less prevalent in other countries—among them, far higher rates of childhood poverty, violence and drug abuse. Problems such as these make the task of public education far more difficult. So, by hanging in there and successfully educating a huge portion of our citizens to high standards, America's educators are, in many ways, accomplishing miracles.

Q What steps can education leaders take to turn the tide of public opinion?

A American educators and their supporters, including school board members, can turn their attention to educating the public. A lot of damaging lies have been told about American education, but lies tend to wither when exposed to the light of evidence and reason. Educators can take the lead in providing that exposure in school board meetings, community forums, talk shows, letters to the editors of newspapers, and testimonies given to state and national legislators.

Our book provides good ammunition for such purposes, of course. In it we also cite other sources that can be used for this purpose, and still others are now beginning to appear in professional books and journals that can be used for good effect.

Q What is the most important message you would like school board members to "hear" when reading your book?

A Three messages really.

- Stand tall—America's educational system is a lot stronger than you have recently been led to believe.
- Get informed—a lot of evidence is now available about the successes of America's schools, and you can find that evidence in readable sources.
- Get involved—be prepared to make the case

for our schools with the public, with legislators and, sometimes, with dispirited educators themselves. Learn about new ways to improve education that are being pioneered today, and when the schools for which you are responsible develop problems, work actively with educators, students, their parents and others to solve those problems.

> *We have far higher rates of childhood poverty, violence and drug use (than some other countries) and these make the task of public education far more difficult.*

TRUE OR FALSE?

Listed here are three false claims that have been made about public education in recent years, according to "The Manufactured Crisis." Each is rebutted with the authors' assessment.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

FALSE "Average achievement of high school students on most standardized tests is now lower than 26 years ago when Sputnik was lunched."

—"A Nation At Risk"

TRUE "Standardized tests provide no support for the myth of a recent decline in American school achievement. Instead, the evidence suggests that average school achievement has either been stable or has increased modestly for a generation or more. And, although top-ranked students and those from 'advantaged' homes have tended to hold their ground, those from the 'less-advantaged' homes have recently shown achievement gains.

—"The Manufactured Crisis"

EDUCATION SPENDING

FALSE "We spend twice as much (on education) as the Japanese and almost 40 percent more than all the other major industrialized countries of the world."

—John Sununu, former chief of staff for the Bush Administration

TRUE "Regardless of the technique used to compare educational expenditures for primary and secondary schools, the United States never comes out first. It is always somewhere in the middle of the pack when compared with other industrialized nations."

—"The Manufactured Crisis"

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

FALSE "When all else is equal, autonomy, organization and achievement are significantly better in private schools than in public.... Our research (was) hardly the first to indicate that private schools outperform public schools academically when the two kinds of schools are working with similar students."

—Economists John Chubb and Terry Moe

TRUE "We know of no evidence that confirms a broad inherent edge in student achievement for private schools, and it is time for the critics to stop pretending that such evidence exists."

—"The Manufactured Crisis"

Barry Dalton is editor of Show Me Education, published by the Missouri School Boards Association (2100 I-70 Drive Southwest, Columbia, Missouri 65203). This article appeared in the Spring 1996 issue.

by Frank W. Bush

Boards Need to Frame A Consensus on Public Education's Mission

Local school board members continue to be challenged to resolve various public education issues. Some of these are budgeting, policymaking, school bus transportation, personnel procurement, bureaucratic reports, collective bargaining and contract renewals. But one school board responsibility that overshadows all others is: governing public education to meet the educational needs of all the students. This, in turn, is becoming an increasingly more difficult responsibility.

Public education has been under diligent scrutiny for over a decade. The change agents who call for school reform harangue about every aspect of public education. But as I read their advocacy positions, one responsibility of public schools is not totally assessed, which is educating all the children. The school reformers identify various problems with public schools and offer systemic reform solutions such as competition, privatization and alternative programs, omitting the fact that respective initiatives potentially exclude certain segments of the student body.

One of the difficulties facing local school boards, in my opinion, is the task of framing a school-community consensus on the mission of public education and thus how to educate all the children. The Perceptions on Education in America: An Annotated Briefing issued in 1992 by the Sandia National Laboratories, commonly known as the Sandia Report, suggests this notion by concluding: "In fact, forming a consensus on required changes may be the greatest challenge facing education today." I further contend that providing for the education needs of all the students is an important ingredient to gaining a supportive consensus on public education. It is a monumental task that is: To establish the essential skills needed for each student while providing responsible programs so each can develop into an informed, contributing citizen.

As school board members reflect upon public education and children, they should consider clarifying the education mission and heightening the public's understanding of their public schools.

Local school boards should:

1. Devote time at regular or special board meetings to discuss curriculum, instruction and the educational needs of children.
2. Openly report and support the "good things" that are happening in their public

school programs via personal statements media coverages, and corporation newsletters.

3. Establish programs of appreciation that periodically express "thank you" and recognition to faculty, staff and students who are achieving the mission of public education.
4. Establish ad hoc sub committees to review the student achievement problems of the school corporation and report solutions for implementation.
5. Engage the development of a long-range strategic plan that includes, but is not limited to, student achievement and educational accountability.

> *School reformers offer various solutions — such as competition, privatization and alternative programs — but they omit the notion that their reforms potentially exclude certain segments of the student body.*

Are these strategies all-inclusive? Probably not. There are many other activities and efforts that local school boards and superintendents of schools have used to assist a public's understanding of the complexities of meeting the needs of all the students. Many of these strategies have been successful in offering an explanation to an immediate concern or in directing a solution to a short-term understanding of and acceptance about meeting the needs of all the children by the general policy and/or policymakers.

Essentially, then, local school boards need to create an image of advocacy on behalf of the children. Three components of an advocacy position should be:

- A commitment to think of "children first."

When school boards resolve issues — such as employment of personnel, evaluation of personnel and programs, review and adoptions of budgets and so forth — a primary focus should be directed at the impact of their decisions on the education of the children.

- An understanding of programs and activities.

There is an ongoing responsibility for school boards to review the effectiveness of educational programs. Accountability to the public, the students and the parents should dictate specific communication on the successful programs and correction or elimination of ineffective programs.

- A persistent effort to obtaining the necessary resources.

Educational programs operated to meet the needs of a diverse society and a correspondingly diverse student body will require more financial, personnel and capital outlays for facilities and equipment in the future than was needed in the past. For instance, inclusive student programs, advanced placement classes, student remediation, essential skills development, alternative schools, and a host of other programs designed to accommodate a diverse student body — of all these will require financial commitment, expanded inservice for personnel, and procurement of specialized facilities and equipment if all of the students are to be afforded an equal education opportunity.

Public education is charged with the mission of meeting the education needs of all the students. School board members, through their resolutions and decisions, have a responsibility to at least raise the consciousness level of the public, other policymakers and advocacy groups about the necessity for, and complexity of, the challenge. ✐

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by Otis K. Lovette

WHY SCHOOL COSTS HAVE INCREASED SO GREATLY DURING THE PAST 20 YEARS—

EDUCATORS MUST CARRY THIS INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

It has become increasingly popular to throw stones at the public education system in this country. Everyone would like to place the blame for many of society's ills and students' shortcomings at the doorsteps of our schoolhouses. Along with this blame goes a negative attitude toward helping schools improve, especially if that involves dedicating more public funds to what many believe are inefficient efforts. Schools are constantly criticized because costs have increased dramatically during the past 20 years.

Is this criticism warranted? Have schools been inefficient in their use of public funds, or are there reasons beyond the control of schools that have caused costs to rise dramatically?

As an educator for the past 32 years, 20 of which were spent in some type of administrative position, I would like to offer a different perspective on the escalation of school costs. During my tenure as both a teacher and an administrator, I witnessed a proliferation of state and federal mandates to schools. Court decisions have been rendered that seemed to be totally out of touch with the financial realities of schools and society. Many other changes over which educators and school boards had little or no control were also imposed from outside the school.

In an effort to provide some insight into the ultimate impact on schools and educations of these outside demands, I have compiled a descriptive listing of some of them. I hope that this information will be useful to school leaders and others in the education community to help explain why costs have risen and why increased funding may be necessary just to maintain required programs at an "adequate" level. The public needs to be properly informed as to why school costs have increased so greatly. It is obvious that many of the new reforms and restructuring efforts being proposed in most parts of the U. S. will be even more costly.

Costs have increased because of court decisions, federal and state mandates (usually without added funding for the mandates), and societal expectations and demands.

Court Decisions

Busing. Many school districts throughout the country are still involved in extensive busing programs aimed at the integration of schools. Most of these programs have been court-ordered and have been very costly to districts, taking resources away from other programs.

Provisions for private schools. Even though the courts have tried to prevent "excessive entanglement" between private schools and the government, many public funds and benefits have been diverted to these schools as a result of court rulings. Private schools now receive funding for transportation, textbooks, and many other services dictated by federal programs and supported by our courts.

Education of children of illegal aliens. Our courts require that we educate the children of illegal aliens. We must also provide these children with

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related services, such as special education, breakfast, lunch and numerous types of remediation. Some states feel the impact more severely than others, but the drain on public school coffers has been tremendous.

Bilingual education and English as a second language. Children who enter our schools from other countries must be provided with instruction in their native language when they arrive and while they are learning English. This has been very expensive for many districts.

Use of school facilities. Many schools have stopped renting school facilities to outside groups because the courts have held that if you rent to one group you must rent to all (open forum). This has not been good for the public relations efforts of schools and have cost them much-needed revenues. The cost of insurance associated with the rental of facilities has also increased greatly because of the large sums granted by courts in injury cases.

Removal of hazards. Of course we must have school environments that are safe for our students, but the cost of securing them has been great. Schools have spent billions of dollars on programs to remove, encapsulate, and monitor asbestos. Schools have also been responsible for replacing drinking fountains that contained lead, removing certain hazardous chemicals from labs, and eliminating radon gas from facilities. These efforts all required dollars that would otherwise have been available for other school needs.

Litigation. Schools have been forced to spend large amounts of money on suits brought against them for student injuries and for alleged violations of students' personal freedoms. Playground accidents, athletic accidents, regulations regarding hair length or dress, requirements for participation in graduation, suspensions and expulsions, searches and seizures, incidents of student harassment, and the use of corporal punishment have all been causes for litigation. The courts have often sided with students. Such court action gives rise to additional litigation, and schools are forced to defend themselves in court over many cases that are frivolous or designed to get a large monetary settlement from the school or its insurer.

It should also be noted that school insurance costs have skyrocketed at least partly because insurers will often settle a dispute by making a large payment to the "injured" party rather than incur the exorbitant costs associated with litigation. Schools have no control over this action, and the result is that more students and their parents are encouraged to bring suit against the school or district because they know that there is a good chance that the insurer will be willing to settle out of court.

Federal Legislation And Regulations

Title IX. Title IX is a part of the Education Amendments of 1972. It requires that schools provide equal opportunities for female students, especially in the area of school activities. If schools do not comply, their federal funds, which include school lunch subsidies, can be withheld. As a result of this law, many new athletic programs for women were created, at considerable expense to schools. The law also forced schools to make major pay adjustments in the salaries of women coaches.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1978. This act stipulates that teachers and others cannot be forced to retire, as long as they are able to carry out the responsibilities of their positions. Thus schools have been forced to keep older employees, who are far more costly than newer employees. Some would also say that newer employees are generally more effective in their positions than those over age 65.

Legislation for special students. The biggest financial impact on public education has come from legislation that deals with the rights of students with disabilities. These laws, which require schools to provide services for students from ages 3 through 21, have resulted in major expenditures of school funds. The programs all have rigid enforcement standards and agencies that monitor school compliance.

Schools must provide such services as speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, adaptive programs of all types, and special classes for students with many different kinds of disabilities and learning problems. Schools must also make available an extended school year (summer school) for students who might regress more than normal students during the summer. Many students require expensive medical and custodial care, the costs of which must be borne by the schools. Classes for special students are often small, and the costs of equipment and accommodations are large, when compared with those for "regular" classrooms.

Schools have also been required to make major renovations or additions to accommodate special students. Such items as elevators, ramps, special toilet facilities, drinking fountains, desks, showers, and modified buses have been added at major cost to schools. Legislation has recently been approved that identifies additional categories of students — those with Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, to mention two — who must receive special services in schools. It is estimated that nearly 20% of our school population is now eligible for expensive special programs.

> *Court decisions have been rendered that seemed to be totally out of touch with financial realities of schools and society.*

Students with AIDS and other communicable diseases. Our courts have determined that students with AIDS must not be discriminated against in our schools. In fact, they are to remain anonymous to most persons in the school setting, including teachers. As a result, most schools are now providing teachers and others with rubber gloves to be worn when they must give assistance to students who are bleeding or when they must come into contact with other bodily fluids or waste from these students. Continuing expenditures are also necessary to provide training and education for those who might have contact with infected students. Finally, sophisticated and costly procedures must be used for disposing of materials that may have been contaminated by these students.

State Legislation and Regulations

New bus safety standards. Many states have adopted new safety standards for school buses. Legislation concerning such things as seat belts, lighting, and the number of students to be transported on each bus has increased transportation costs. Schools have also had to absorb greatly increased costs associated with the purchase, maintenance, and operation of school buses. In addition, many schools have had to install expensive video equipment on buses as a deterrent to unruly students.

Mandates for reducing class size. Many states have passed legislation that identifies the maximum class size allowable at various grade levels. Consequent reductions in class size have been very costly for schools.

Required kindergarten. Most states now require that kindergarten be offered for students. The addition of another grade has meant that schools have had to acquire additional space, teaching staff, and equipment.

Collective bargaining laws. Many states have passed laws that allow or require collective bargaining with teachers and other school groups. Some states have also sanctioned the use of strikes by education groups. Such laws have severely limited school boards in their decision making about the expenditure of scarce resources.

Required testing programs. In efforts to hold schools accountable, state legislatures have mandated a variety of testing programs for local schools, and a national testing program is being actively promoted. Such programs are added on to the testing that schools are already doing and therefore require additional funds.

New safety standards. Legislatures have upgraded regulations pertaining to school safety and convenience. New standards for fire protection; handicapped accessibility; number of toilets and lavatories; and wiring, plumbing, and other mechanical systems all mean increased school costs. Educators have also realized that more must be spent on construction to make schools "vandal proof." New safety standards for football equipment (especially helmets), science laboratories, industrial programs, and playground equipment have also driven up costs.

Increased accountability requirements. In addition to increasing testing requirements, many states are imposing more rigid standards for student accounting, inventory control, financial accounting, and adherence to state regulations. To demonstrate compliance with these standards, school staff members must put in additional time maintaining records and completing other paperwork. To facilitate the submission of statistical data, schools have also been required to purchase computer equipment that interfaces with equipment at the state level. The amount of record keeping that must be carried out for federal programs has also increased. Directors of food service programs have been particularly burdened by the new requirements.

Imposed programs and curricular offerings. During the past 20 years states have asked schools to make numerous additions to their curricula and programs. Sex education; AIDS education; consumer education; family life education; drug education; classes in boating and hunting safety; foreign language, economics, and law courses — all have been required, often without additional or appropriate funding. The national goal (which has been adopted by many states) of being number one in the world in science and mathematics by the year 2000 has meant that schools have also found it necessary to increase their offerings in those areas.

Societal Expectations And Demands

Weapon detection systems. Because guns and other weapons are being brought to school, there is public pressure for schools to invest in security personnel and costly detection systems.

School security systems. Schools have found it necessary to protect the taxpayers' investments in building and facilities by installing security systems. Schools spend millions of dollars each year as a result of vandalism to facilities and equipment. Some systems even have staff members who are hired solely to remove graffiti and to repair other damage from vandalism.

Paid police patrols. Schools have become easy targets for drug dealers and others conduction illegal activities. Police are hired to eliminate these undesirable activities, but they are also hired to control student conduct in the halls and on school grounds.

Alternative settings. Many students today will not conform to the normal routines of our schools and do not seem to be able to benefit from the usual curriculum. Society has vigorously opposed the expulsion of these students, who are unmotivated and often disruptive or even dangerous. Thus schools have found it necessary to provide different opportunities and settings for these students. Such provisions are expensive and often require additional facilities, equipment, and staff.

School health clinics and other health services. Health clinics have been established in many

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schools to provide information and services that relate to communicable diseases, birth control, and so on. The number of school nurses also continues to rise as regulations and the fear of liability limit what teachers and administrators can do for students, even in emergency situations.

Pursuing truants. Attendance has become a major problem in many of the nation's schools, which find it necessary to hire employees to pursue those who are chronically absent. This is an important issue, because school funding is often tied to student attendance.

Air conditioning. Schools of 20 and 30 years ago were seldom air-conditioned. Today, most of our schools are air-conditioned, at considerable expense. It is reasonable to expect that schools be cooled, as are many of our prisons, but the costs for acquisition, energy usage, and maintenance have been high.

Increased use of technology. Schools have essentially been forced to computerize and have had to bear the major expense of doing so. As a means of improving the efficiency of various management functions, computers were sorely needed, and the expense was probably justified. Computers have also proliferated in classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, and the costs for acquisition, software, maintenance, and replacement have been tremendous. Schools have been expected to adopt this and other new technologies in order to produce graduates who are technologically literate.

Greatly increased costs for purchasing. It is hard to believe the prices of today's textbooks, workbooks, and library books. Schools often find themselves waiting many years beyond the planned adoption dates for new texts and materials because funds are not available. In addition, schools must pay for the purchase, maintenance, and operation of computers, televisions, video equipment, and copiers — expenditures that were minimal or nonexistent 20 years ago.

Before-and-after-school care. Schools have become heavily involved in extended-day programs designed to assist families in which the sole parent or both parents must work outside the home. These programs are usually designed to self-supporting, but overhead costs are often not taken into account. More schools are also providing preschool programs.

In addition to the costs associated with all the changes just discussed, school personnel have been forced to dedicate extra time to complying with ever-growing reporting, monitoring, and administrative requirements. Schools are often criticized for having too many administrators. But a closer look would reveal that many of the administrative positions that have come into being during the past 20 years were created to oversee the new mandated programs. It should also be noted that student conduct in many schools has deteriorated, and administrators have been added to perform various disciplinary functions.

While this article was not intended to be exhaustive, I hope that my listing of the pressures and demands that schools face will provide insight into some of the reasons for increased school costs. I recognize that many of the changes mentioned have been desirable or even necessary, but schools have been required to carry the resulting financial burdens.

We in the U.S. have never paid a high price for education (witness teacher salaries), and we won't in the future — at least not until we can understand why school costs have risen so rapidly during the last 20 years. Educators at all levels must carry this information to the public.

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Case Study

Showdown at Dodge—After Finishing His Hired Cleanup of the School, a Superintendent Doesn't Want to Ride Away.

by Philip T. West

Superintendent Pat Masters was finally home, figuratively speaking. From his office in a large brick building overlooking the main street in Dodge Massachusetts, he could see the museum containing exhibits of some of the West's most famous lawmen, such as Wyatt Earp and his brothers, Bat Masterson and Pat Garrett. The notorious Doc Holliday, Billy the Kid, Jesse and Frank James, the Daltons, and John Ringo weren't overlooked, either. In the galley, photographs and movie posters depicting important scenes in western history and cinema were on display.

This quaint little city with its streets named Rio Grande, San Antonio, Wichita, Tombstone, and the like had been "tamed" by a Kansan named Mike Toohey, who was once a western town tamer. Toohey had been a Texas Ranger and a marshall of a surprising number of small bustling towns in the West before coming East, starting a shoe factory on a shoestring, and parlaying it into millions of dollars. Using power and influence, Toohey had renamed Sevonshire, the city that made him rich, Dodge City and tried to turn it into a facsimile of the West in the middle of the East.

> *Because his grandfather had been a marshal in Dodge City, Kansas, his father a police officer, and because he was Pat Master's son, he was labeled Bat, as in Bat Masterson, the once famous lawman.*

But it was not the history of the town that made it so appealing to Masters. Nor was his rapport with Dodge based on his family's feelings. Only he and his wife, Trish, lived at home now, and her preference was simply to be in reasonable proximity to their two daughters who were attending Boston University and M.I.T., and to use her doctorate in the field of special education. No, it was none of these. The town's appeal was that he found it easy to identify with town tamer Toohey; and had he been born at an earlier time, he thought that he, not Toohey, might have been responsible for this Dodge.

Indeed, Pat Master's was born in Dodge City, Kansas and had received his elementary education there before his family moved to Texas. He was third in the family's line of Patricks, being a junior to a junior, an appellation he despised. Because his grandfather had been a marshall in Dodge, his father a police officer, and because he was often called Pat Master's son, someone had labeled him Bat, as in Bat Masterson, the once famous lawman. Already a movie and western folk hero enthusiast, he embraced the nickname, using it continuously through the years.

Young Bat left Dodge to accompany his parents to Texas, where his father had taken a job as a town sheriff. There in a high school near San Antonio, he completed his first 12 years of education. By the time he graduated, he had added considerably to his knowledge about the old West, frequenting the Alamo and the Frontier life section in the local library. He listened to tall tales about the old West from anyone who could recall them. He became so immersed in the history of the old West that he decided he wanted, above all, to be a history teacher.

By the time that "town tamer" Bat was through making the severe changes he had been hired to do, he had engendered a certain degree of dislike in the school and public communities.

He began teaching in a middle school in Long Island, New York after graduating from a Massachusetts college on a sports scholarship. A year later, he had his master's degree from a Long Island college and by the time he was 24, his principal, Glenda Davis, was urging him to seek certification so he could become her assistant principal. He was an extremely hard worker, knew his subject matter well, and above all, was a tremendous disciplinarian. The children naturally took to him; his deep, quiet voice was both commanding and soothing at the same time. Had Bat been shorter and blonder, Davis would have dubbed him Shane after the hero Alan Ladd played in the western classic of the same name.

And so Bat Masters entered another phase of his career and, like his ancestors, made every effort to keep the peace in the school. He was quite successful in his post, so much so that when Davis became an assistant superintendent of curriculum, she recommended him for the vacant principalship. At age 27, he was a principal. Two years later, Davis moved up to the superintendency and brought Bat to the central office to fill her former position. The two had become close friends by then, and Bat was often a dinner guest at her home. On one such occasion, Davis' husband, Matt, introduced his niece to Bat and within a year they were married.

Bat was not a man who might rest on his laurels or seek a sinecure. Within four years, he completed a doctorate in educational administration and became a superintendent of a different district. In this troubled community, a series of failed bond elections had caused dismay among the parents and teachers of hundreds of students who were crowded in cluttered, portable buildings where the heating and air conditioning systems repeatedly failed. This was compounded by a half dozen citizen groups attacking nearly every aspect of the school system. People came to board meetings carrying placards reading "Back to the Basics," "A D for Darwell Teachers," and "Too Many Administrators." The board had been evenly split on hiring Bat— one half wanted to promote from within—until one tired board member, who wanted to go home, threw in with the yeas and Bat had been hired.

Bat came in with a mission. He provided leadership for a board which had none, replacing lethargic administrators and ineffective teachers. He intimidated parents by announcing that he would be forced to eliminate all services and extracurricular activities if they did not pass the next bond proposal. They were sufficiently jarred by his honesty and bluntness to amass in numbers at the polls, voting in favor of the school bond to finance a salary raise and better working conditions for the staff, and proper housing for the students.

Unfortunately, by the time the "town tamer" was through bullying people to accomplish the job he was hired to do, he had engendered a certain degree of dislike among the board members, administrators, and teachers, as well as parents. As a result, the board bought out his contract after two years on a three-year, annual renewal contract. After he had been eased out of town with the payoff, the board simply promoted from within a person everyone knew and liked—an innocuous individual, whose lack of ambition would compensate for all the recent changes and stabilize the system.

Such school systems would have cycles of severe change to no change at all, sometimes for years, until it was time for the next marshall superintendent to "tame the town again." But Bat enjoyed the marshal role; he and Trish moved their growing family seven times since their marriage so that he could act as a change agent in schools in several states, stretching from the East to the West coasts. They were even in Texas for a short time. Now though, at age 53, Bat was feeling that he had finally found a place where he wanted to stay, a simulated western city that evoked sweet memories of his past and kept him close to the culture of Boston.

In other words, the town tamer wanted to hang up his hardware and call Dodge his home. He no longer wanted to be detested, but respected and appreciated. He wanted to be a hero, to be included among the archives of O'Mally's Museum of the Wild West as an educational order enforcer who had fired his last shot in making changes that boards could not bring about with existing personnel. He knew that he was not one of a kind; there were others like him, but they were decreasing in number as new, participatory forms of management became popular in school systems.

He had been in Dodge for almost three years and had made dramatic changes. As might be expected, he was hearing all kinds of rumblings about his possible expeditious removal so the district could return to normal and time heal all wounds. He knew that half of the board members were still friendly to him, and some of the administrators he had attempted to nurture as their leader seemed to be in his corner. He had made many friends among the teaching faculty, too. But how numerous and how loyal they would be in a showdown was not foreseeable.

He knew he was not one of a kind, but others like him were decreasing in number as new, participatory forms of mangement became popular in school systems.

For some reason, which he had found rather inexplicable until now, he had also become more involved in the local scene in Dodge than he had in previous places. Evidently, from day one the thought that this was to be his last stand had grown in the deepest recesses of his mind. Only now did he recognize that fact. In all of the places he had superintended, he had been there for one reason: to bring about changes that boards and their constituencies deemed necessary. He had never thought of staying in those towns, nor did he want to stay, but that did not necessarily mean that he could not have stayed. Now, the thought that he would not be able to stay even if he wanted to bothered him immensely. Maybe the townspeople in Dodge, like the characters in the movie, would be infuriated by his continued presence. They might prefer giving the schools back to the traditionalists.

A rumor that the board planned to less than subtly hasten him along his way at the regular meeting tonight had already reached his ears. But there were also those who wanted him to stay as their permanent superintendent. If these indications were true, there would probably be a large attendance at the meeting. Bat had influenced their minds before by exercising his best logic, but could he reach their hearts? Could he tell them about his feelings for Dodge and would he be convincing enough so they would believe him?

Just the other day, a chance meeting with one of the board members in a discount grocery store had evolved into a conversation exchange that hinted of his anticipated departure. With a trace of a smile, George Baker had said, "Things must be a little boring for you now that you've revamped Dodge's educational program and made it a showpiece school system. A man like you must be already looking beyond the horizon of little old Dodge." He might as well have added, "When are you leaving?," because he most surely thought it.

Bat was ready to hang up his hardware and call Dodge, Mass. his home. He wanted to be respected and appreciated as an educational order enforcer who had fired his last shot in making changes that boards could not.

Bat had wanted to reply, "I love Dodge and I plan to make it my home." Instead, he responded, "I am pleased to hear you say that Dodge has a showpiece school system. We all worked hard to make it that way and we—and that includes the entire community—should congratulate ourselves on a job well done." As they had separated, Bat's last words to the departing board member were, "Good seeing you, George."

That same day, just outside Alamo High School as Bat was entering the building and a parent was leaving it, the parent had said, "Dr. Masters, I want you to know that I think you are doing a wonderful job here in Dodge. My son enjoys school so much more these days. He says his teachers are happy all the time—a far cry from how it was before. He even tells me that his principal is a great guy when you know him. So whatever you're doing, just keep on doing it!"

Another sign that he had some support came in the form of a telephone call that same day from one of his newly appointed principals, Sheila Brown. She began with, "Bat, I truly appreciate your confidence in me and your recommendation to the board of my appointment as principal of the Tombstone Middle School. I should have said this last month when the board announced my promotion, but I was at a loss for words. Just too happy to think, I guess. Then, when I heard the rumor that you might be leaving, I especially wanted to tell you, don't go. We need you in Dodge."

These contacts indicated that there was a chance—a remote chance—that staying in Dodge was possible. Last night, Trish and he had discussed this until the wee hours of the morning. He wondered if he could induce her to attend the board meeting; in his career, the only board meetings she had attended were those in other school districts where she was employed in special education. So he didn't ask her, although his eyes had pleaded for her physical presence support.

Now, leaving his office to walk across a parking lot to the board meeting, he saw his wife's car in one of the front slots. Just as in the movie, High Noon, he thought, she, like that marshall's wife, was ready to join him in his fight. He unbuttoned his suit coat as he neared the building. His hands hung to his sides as the wind tugged at his tie. In a slow walk toward the door under the light of a snow white moon, he took a deep, preparatory breath and with one swift draw of his hand opened the door on his showdown at Dodge.

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Case study and/or case study responses submitted for publication should be sent to Philip T. West, Professor of Educational Administration, Harrington Education Center, Room 222, Texas A&M, College Station, TX 77843-4226.

Response to Case Study in Vol. 17, No. 3

Case Study Response

Up to Bat

by Laura Yzaguirre

Superintendent Bat Masters faces a professional and personal crisis. Having moved his family and his work seven times in his role as the "hired gun," the change-agent superintendent now wants to stop running and make a final home. He feels a need to be a caretaker of what he helped to reorganize and construct.

Masters has been his own worst enemy. The very character traits that favored his "town tamer" career now work against his staying. Unlike other superintendents, he has not invested time or skill in negotiations and reconciliations. After three years, he is still a distant person even to the board members who support him. He had begun developing administrative leaders as a way of maintaining the change momentum after his departure, but even this effort may be too weak and perceived as too self-serving to help him in a power struggle. The survival skills that his superintendent colleagues seemed to have are not in his portfolio.

Bat Masters' only hope is to use methods opposite to his usual attack mode. He should stop being the lone gun, court his subordinates, and bare his vulnerability. He should ask for help and hope that his support would rise from the community. He must plan the "showdown."

Before going to the board meeting, Bat should have called the mayor. While community leaders normally do not interfere with school politics, the mayor should be informed that Bat's time could be limited and if he was compelled to leave now, the changes that pleased the business community could be lost. Bat must share with him that he loves the community and wants to make it his permanent home. While not asking the mayor to speak in his behalf, he should have pointed out that the board's action at that meeting would have definite effects on the city.

Earlier that day, Superintendent Masters should have called his principals to a meeting to discuss future programs and allow them to voice their ideas. In noting how his administration could help them, he could have demonstrated his participatory skills. Praising them for all the work they have done for the community, he could have casually pointed out what they had managed to accomplish together, what could still be done, and what the district could be. During the meeting, plans for administrative professional development as the district moves forward into site-based management should have been mentioned with emphasis on the support they would receive as the district changed from a top down organization to a bottom up program.

Before the showdown, Masters should have met with parent representatives. Again, while not mentioning his contract concerns, he could have shared with them that he and his wife loved the community and enjoyed living there. He could have mentioned his satisfaction from having parents tell him that the mood in the schools now was such an improvement, and his pride in the schools that student achievement had risen. He could have told them how

Case Study Response

out-of-district teachers and administrators were visiting Dodge City schools to copy their programs.

And in his own interests, Bat should have consulted his own lawyer to learn what costs the district will incur in a buy-out. The golden parachute he had insisted on to even move to Dodge City may help his cause to stay since it may seem an exorbitant amount to pay to remove a man who had created a showcase school district.

Bat Masters should have cultivated a newspaper story on his interest in Western lore. He would have had opportunities to be quoted on his concern for the children of the community and be portrayed as a vital citizen of Dodge City. Someone so well versed in the town's history demonstrates that he should continue being a part of its future.

Lastly, as part of the board packet for the meeting, Superintendent Masters should have included an update on school programs that the staff feels helped the most to improve student achievement. This packet would also contain the newspaper article on the historian/superintendent who loves the city and its children. Prominent on the agenda would be student recognitions for award winners.

If Superintendent Masters had prepared in the above manner, he would not be alone in his efforts to remain in Dodge City. In contrast to his former buy-out meetings, the presence of his wife would give a human touch to the tough leader, the mayor would have pulled in several business leaders to speak about the continued need for innovation in a changing business environment, the principals would address their role as managers of future growth, and the parents would present their appreciation of the improvements. Having recently featured the superintendent in their newspaper, the media would be there for a follow up story and possibly portray the situation as the underdog verses the system.

Bat Masters may then have walked into the board meeting alone, but the crowd of supporters he had marshalled would be waiting for him.

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The Case Study editor is Philip T. West. Send your case study or response to Professor West at the Department of Educational Administration, Texas A&M University, Room 222, Harrington Ed. Center, College Station, TX 77843-4226.

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Book Reviews

by Arthur W. Steller

Books for review and requests to serve as guest book reviewer may be sent to editor Arthur W. Steller, Superintendent of Kingston City Schools, 61 Crown St., Kingston, NY 12401.

Preparing Students for the 21st Century.

By Donna Uchida with Marvin Cetron and Floretta McKenzie. American Assn. of School Administrators, 1801 N. Moore St., Arlington, VA 22209. 1996.

Occasionally, nice things do come in small packages and that's the case with this book of 74 pages. Using an hour or so, a public relations official could quickly digest the contents and tap it for presentations to the public.

A surprising wide range of topics are touched on by the authors. They cover the political climate; the needed academic content; essential skills and behaviors; community, parental, and governmental relationships; and employment and training trends for the next century. Many successful programs are cited, although readers will have to go elsewhere for indepth analysis of these.

Statements such as "We need to stop educating people as if they'll have a plant to run when they graduate" avoid pie-in-the-sky rhetoric and each chapter includes specific and practical steps.

Making Schools Work: Improving Performance and Controlling Costs.

By Eric Hamshek. The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. 1994.

The economics of education is often an ignored field, except when a particular study reinforces the political mood. That's the case with this Brookings study. The panel of economists who contributed to this book are convinced of the following:

- American's future depends upon the quality of its schools.
- The costs of education have been raising faster than nearly any other area of our society.
- The performance of education has been steadily deteriorating.
- Little real evaluation is done in education.
- Most current reform efforts will yield little improvement in performance.
- While no new money should be provided until current funds are more productively used, there is hope for gradually making advancements.

The solution, according to these scholars is "...widespread use of appropriately designed performance incentives..." The term, "incentives," describes a wide variety of activities at local, state, and national levels.

This work presents an extremely clear and logical analysis. The obstacles are also cited. Although the arguments are somewhat repetitive and lack specific examples, there is a recognition that these proposed theories require validation in practice.

How to Prepare for and Respond to a Crisis.

By Robert Lichtenstein, David Schonfeld, Marsha Kline, and Dee Speese-Linehoam. Assn. for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 1995.

School safety is no longer assumed, and preventative measures, while necessary, are no longer sufficient to preclude the possibilities for a crisis to occur. So there is an emerging concern by school officials about being prepared for crisis situations.

The material for this book arose out of the Yale Child Study and was developed by a regional crisis committee. Most school districts will not have the resources to create such a plan individually. A regional approach would be most sensible and this booklet can provide the foundation.

This work emphasizes addressing the emotional and mental health needs of any victims and those persons around them, and communication among anyone connected with the crisis. The identification of a media coordinator is included in the model along with simple guidelines for working with the news media. This 64-

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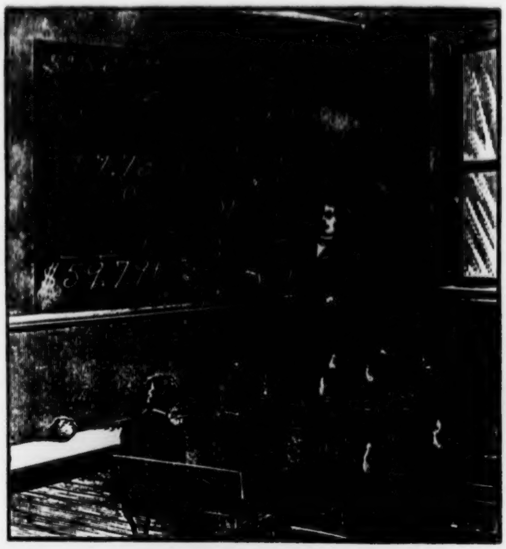

The Monster Under the Bed.

By Stan Davis and Jim Botkins. Touchstone, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. 1994.

These authors suggest that the monster under the bed of adults is the unchanging "old corporate dinosaur" or "the specter of technology run amok." For educators the monster may be the following judgmental statement: "Behind it all looms a gargantuan government-run education system incapable of handling a doubling of knowledge about every seven years." These authors are convinced that government-run schools are not working, therefore, business is rapidly becoming "the reluctant heir" with respect to learning. Business is seen as responding to the knowledge revolution while schools are not in sync. There are seven broad ways that business is taking advantage of the current environment. One is "...business-driven learning will be organized according to the values of today's information age: Service, productivity, customization, networking, and the need to be fast, flexible, and global."

Public schools in particular are vulnerable to the press of business. The knowledge for-profit revolution calls for schools to supplement the traditional 3Rs with the new six Rs: risks, results, rewards, relationships, research, and rivalry. If not, competitors will replace the institution of schooling as we know it. "One future possibility is that government-run schools will focus on becoming the high-volume, low-cost producer of excellent basic education. Its market then will be the underclass that the private sector will gladly leave to it as the least attractive end of education from a business perspective."

Many people will find this book to be controversial, but there is value in a controversy as people often begin to think in new ways. Educators and public relations officials are advised to open these pages to discover The Monster Under the Bed while it is still under the bed

Developing a Quality Curriculum.

By Allan Glatthorn. Assn. for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 1994.

Page-for-page, this slim book is the best curriculum development guide currently available. Allan Glatthorn is an old hand at curriculum matters, both in working with school districts and in publishing theoretical articles. He clearly understands curriculum issues as evidenced by the following:

> *In too many districts, a high-quality curriculum guide is written, presented to the teachers in a summer workshop, put on a shelf, and then never referred to again.*
>
> *To avoid such wasted effort, you need to develop and carry out an effective implementation strategy. In fact, as a general rule of thumb. you should allocate more resources to implementing the new curriculum than to developing it. Implementing is a complex change that requires the efforts of all involved if it is to be successful.*

The author does not advocate a single theory of quality; he does not impose rigid formulas or structure for achieving curriculum excellence. He does, however, concisely and candidly detail the various committees, processes, and documents that have brought success to many districts—all of which can be adapted to local needs. Reading this book would also enable a school public relations official or anyone else to understand and explain the process to others.

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The Best Strategy for Crisis Communications Is Honesty

by John Mark Dempsey and Philip T. West

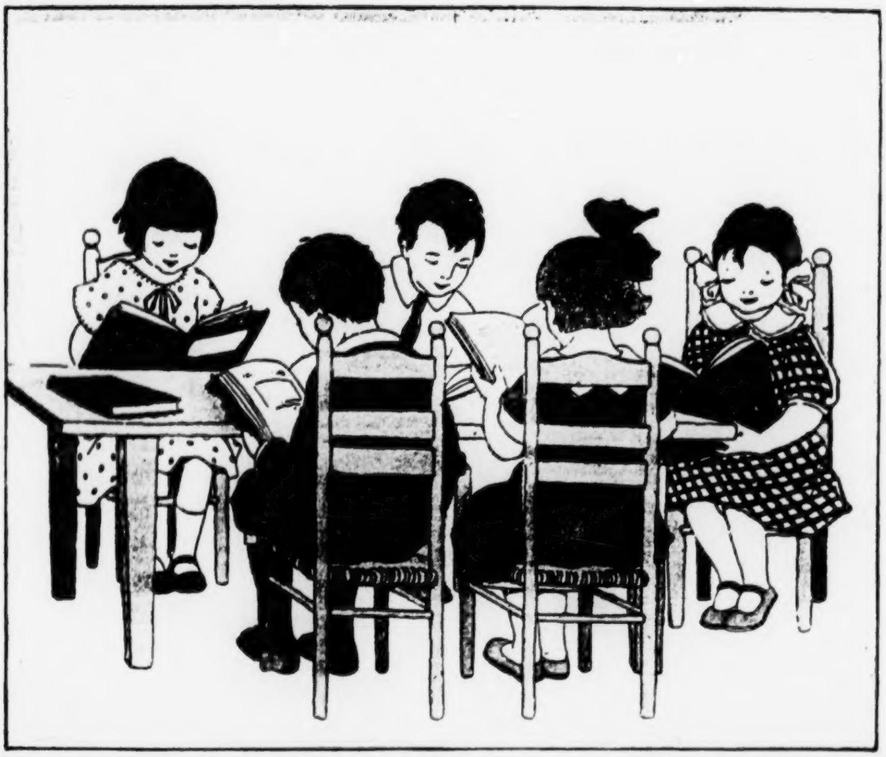
Educational public relations directors identified honesty and openness as their most important strategy when dealing with newspaper education writers during a school system crisis, according to a recent national study. On the other side of the coin, newspaper education writers listed fairness and trustworthiness on their part as second to the strategy of having alternate sources of information.

When the PR directors were asked the open-ended question, "What three crisis strategies have you used that have been most helpful in dealing with the press?," they offered an abundance of methods that had proven most helpful to them. The six most frequently stated (in order of importance) were:

- Being honest/open
- Being timely/prompt in responding to crisis
- Establishing credibility/good relations in advance
- Using a single spokesperson
- Being available/accessible
- Being accurate/get all facts

In responding to a similar question, "What three strategies have you found most helpful in dealing with a school system in a crisis?" the newspaper writers placed "Having alternate sources/talking to teachers, students, others" at the top of their list followed by "Being fair/trustworthy." In descending order of importance, some of the others were:

- Going to the scene of crisis
- Being respectful, polite, patient
- Knowing who to talk to



- Being persistent
- Establishing a prior relationship with the school public relations person
- Telling all sides of the story

When asked a second question, "What three crisis strategies should be avoided in dealing with the press?, " the PR directors brought the matter of honesty once again to the foreground. According to them, dishonesty ranked among the top four strategies to be avoided. The top 10 of these were:

- Saying "no comment"
- Refusing/avoiding phone calls
- Being dishonest
- Stalling/stonewalling
- Playing favorites
- Adopting an adversarial stance/becoming angry
- Having several spokespersons
- Providing inaccurate information
- Speculating

A similar question directed at the newspaper writers, revealed that "Taking only official statements/going only to public relations department" took first place on this group's list of strategies to avoid. So while honesty is perceived by both groups as the best policy, this response would seem to suggest that there is obviously some skepticism on the part of newspaper writers about receiving the whole story from a single official or department. This is despite the fact that a basic tenet of crisis management is to have a single spokesperson address the media.

However, both groups have a desire to cultivate trusting relationships before a crisis occurs (as evinced by including such relationships among their most helpful strategies). So it is likely that any concerted efforts in this direction will greatly assist in creating the necessary link between them to dispel the notion that truth is not handed out but must be ferreted out. Interestingly, not establishing relationships of the kind mentioned is listed as a strategy to avoid by both groups in the study. "Being hostile, rude, threatening" and "browbeating, being overly pushy" occupied second and third place on the list of avoidance strategies offered by the newspaper writers.

When taken together, the various lists that were an outcome of this study serve as a guide to achieve the quality of relationships that both press and school professionals seek.

This information was taken from a small part of a large study that compared the actual and ideal perceptions of educational PR directors with those of newspaper education writers regarding the fostering of strong press relations in crisis situations. Ninety percent of the educational PR directors and 52 percent of the newspaper education writers polled responded to the survey. The PR directors were randomly selected from the membership directory of the National School Public Relations Association and the newspaper education writers from the Education Writers of America directory.

John Mark Dempsey is a science writer at Texas A&M University. Philip T. West is a professor of educational administration at the same university.

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Membership on the board is open to interested practitioners and scholars. We adjust membership yearly as necessary because of job changes and retirements.

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Guidelines

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations

A refereed journal–scholarly articles by academic/higher education authorities are refereed by an international editorial review board. The *Journal* also accepts articles by practitioners and administrators in basic (K-12) education and journalists at large.

Scope

Articles are sought on topics such as internal communication and climate, employee motivation, parent involvement, partnerships, working with the news media, community participation, audits, surveying and polls, community service programs for students, communication training, advisory committees, volunteers, writing and speaking, publications, alumni associations, foundations, mentoring, photography, and related topics.

The overall goal of the *Journal* is to support efforts to enhance/foster student achievement and staff productivity, and to provide information to build public knowledge of the value and potential benefits of a sound basic education of our youth. We advocate the concept that the school public relations function must be based on fact and reality as compared to ideals and goals of educators and the community at large.

Style

Scholarly articles should be prepared following style guidelines of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association.

We prefer citations to be numbered sequentially in the text and then detailed following the article. An author can include references of related articles/book with address of publishers—in a separate list. We accept photographs, illustrations and tables as appropriate.

Submissions

- Submit four copies of a manuscript with a letter from the author(s).
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The Journal of Educational RELATIONS

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Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships ✐ Vol. 17 No. 4

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Notes From the Editor

What Causes the Different Attitudes?

One of the conclusions of the Storer, Licklider and Cychosz report (lead article, this issue) is that the educators included in the study have many inaccurate perceptions of parents of their students.

If we were to generalize such a situation across North America, we would then have to ask the question; "Why do educators and parents have such different views on so many important issues?"

To focus on educators: what in their experiences would have led them to think that parents' primary interests relate more to sports rather than academics?

Why would they think that parents do not value the work of educators?

What would make teachers think that children who are having difficulty in school have "problem" parents?

What better time to justify a comprehensive program of school-community relations, in which teachers, parents and others in the community learn to work together—instead of separately—on behalf of children.

One Step Further

We share the history of a college-school district partnership in this issue as an example of a relationship we'd like to see become a trend, for several reasons:

1. One main reason teachers and administrators may not embrace the concept of parent/citizen participation and involvement is because of the training they received in undergraduate and graduate school. That is, the training they did not receive. Only a handful of higher education institutions offer or require course work in understanding parents and working with community residents for prospective teachers and administrators.
2. Community outreach programs, such as the one John Forde describes in this issue, can benefit the university faculty as well as the school's staff. Such activity requires both groups to come to grips with the reality of the ballot box and the concerns of parents and the public.

Here is what one state secretary of education had to observe:

> "Many educators operated in obscurity for so many years the they [have been] completely unprepared for the public's recent but accelerating interest in their activities. They consider it inappropriate that their activities should be held up for public scrutiny..."
> "Another characteristic of a professional educator that inhibits effective communication is...the regrettable fact that most educators have little communication experience and almost no communication training."

These were the comments of Floyd Christian, Florida's state superintendent of public instruction in 1967. Christian spoke at a conference sponsored by Project Public Information. The conference topic was "Public Understanding As a Field of Study," meaning at the higher education level.

I wrote the PPI conference report. Because much of its content applies as well today as it did 30 years ago, we will publish most of that report in the Journal in the next issue. We will call on representatives of universities and other organizations involved in the 1967 conference for their contemporary response to the issues raised then, and will publish their responses throughout 1997.

As we said then, "public understanding of education and educational understanding of the public are essential if schools are to continue meeting the needs of society."
We should have an interesting 1997 for Journal readers.

Al Holliday

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by John H. Storer, Barbara Licklider and Charles M. Cychosz

PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS AND PARENTS—

Where They Disagree Causes Conflict

This paper examines the perceptions and misperceptions parents and educators have regarding issues identified as key to school functioning. Conclusions are drawn indicating that while parents' and educators' own perceptions of these issues are very similar, educators' inaccurate perceptions of parents are a likely barrier to school-community relations.

In a previously published article[1], the differences between educators' rankings of factors important for school functioning and those educators' perceptions of how parents would rank the same factors were examined. In 11 focus groups of rural Iowa educators, 176 multiple references to school effectiveness factors were identified. These 16 items were summarized into 24 categories.

To help identify how these categories were related to beliefs about parent/community involvement, a ranking task was administered to a sample of rural Iowa educators. Educators were asked to rank the 24 items in order of each item's contribution to the effective performance of their job or importance as a marker of their effectiveness and, in parallel fashion, to rank the same items as they perceived parents and community members would rank them.

What Educators Perceive

The results were that educators perceive parents as having almost diametrically opposed priorities. This can be seen in an examination of columns 2 and 3, Table 1.

We concluded that:

1. Educators perceive that parents are cynical about the quality of schooling their children receive, as indicated by the projection of attitudes questioning the quality of faculty and administration, and the relatively high ranking of items concerning graduating students and gaining college admission.
2. Parents are perceived by equators as not appreciative of teachers' work load and working conditions, indicated by the ranking of items concerning paper work, work load, and salary as least important from the perceived point of view of parents.
3. Parents are perceived as unappreciative or unaware of the "real work" of schools, indicated by the perceived high ranking of co-curricular activities.
4. The family environment factors ranked as most important by educators were projected as being unimportant to parents.

These findings, coupled with other research on parent involvement,[2-4] led to the conclusion that:

> It is important for educators to examine their beliefs about parents and take care that programmatic approaches to parent involvement do not increase the gap between students with "good" parents and students with "bad" parents by further marginalizing a "hard core" of parents deemed unreachable. It is equally important that student success is not made contingent on the behavior of the student's parents so students whose parents cannot, or will not, become involved are left even further behind.[1]

What Parents Perceive

To complete this investigation of differences in perception, a ranking task made up of the same 24 items was administered randomly to 58 parents of children enrolled in rural Iowa school districts, recruited from attendees at workshops to inform parents about middle school education. These parents were asked to respond to the factors from their perspective and what they thought would be the perspective of teachers in their school districts. The results of this task are presented in columns 4 and 5 of table 1.

The results of the parent rankings show that:

1. Educators perceive parents' interests as low in four of the five items that parents rank as their highest priority.
2. The areas perceived as less important (about half of all 24 items) parallel the perceptions of educators.
3. Parents think that salary is of prime importance to educators, while teachers think that parents rank this item of least importance.

Comparing Ranking of the Two Groups

An overview of the data indicates that parents' and educators' perceptions of what constitutes important factors for school functioning are, in fact, very similar. The most noteworthy exception is that parents are much more concerned about outcomes in terms of "having more graduates enter college" and "graduating all students who enter ninth grade" than educators (columns 2 and 4). This discrepancy is heightened by the fact that parents perceive educators as ranking these factors as much more important than they actually do (columns 4 and 5). One interpretation of this is that educators are more likely to be directly concerned with the process of education while parents are more concerned with outcomes. Another interpretation could be an understanding on the part of educators that college is not right for every student.

Other important discrepancies are that parents rank "family values" and "better qualified faculty" more highly (columns 4 and 5) than they perceive educators as ranking these factors, although parents' and educators' own rankings are very similar (columns 2 and 4). Also, parents view salary as a much more important issue for educators than they think it is, and view discipline as relatively unimportant to educators. Smaller discrepancies appear for the factors relating to staff development, class size, grading practices and work load.

Taken together, parents' misperceptions of educators seem to call for a "demystification" of the education process. While parents are very concerned with outcomes, they may not fully understand how factors like discipline, class size and work load contribute to outcomes, while the relationship may seem obvious to educators. It also seems likely that some parents are more likely to express opinions and make demands concerning factors like extracurricular activities, leading to the dramatic misperception educators have of the importance of these factors to parents.

Overall, these results indicate that parents and educators do have a similar vision of schooling and that parents have a fairly accurate view of educators' priorities.

These date indicate that the misperceptions that likely stand as a barrier to parent involvement and community participation are educators' incorrect perceptions of parents.

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Table 1

Comparison of Parent Rankings with Educator Rankings

* = items significantly different, p<.01 by Wilcoxon's Matched-pairs Signed-ranks test 1= most important	Educator rankings	Educator perception of parent rankings	Parent rankings	Parent perception of educator rankings
Fewer drug and alcohol problems	4*	11	1	1
Stronger family values in the community	2*	16	2*	11
More parental involvement	1*	17	3	6
Better qualified faculty	9	4	4*	10
Having more graduates enter college	18	10	5	3
Graduating all students who enter ninth grade	13	7	6	4
A better school climate	3	8	7	5
A more relevant curriculum	5*	12	8	9
A more responsive administration	10*	5	9	8
More economic opportunities in the community	11	3	10	14
More staff development	7*	18	11	7
Smaller classes	6*	15	12	13
A more responsive AEA	19	19	13	12
Changing discipline policy	8	21	14	18
More National Merit finalists	21*	13	15	17
Increasing teachers' salaries	15*	23	16*	2
Less paper work	17*	22	17	16
Involving more students in extra-curricular activities	16*	6	18	20
Reduced work load	12*	24	19*	15
More extra-curricular activities	22	9	20	23
Changing grading practices	14	14	21	24
Passing a bond levy	20	20	22	22
A successful basketball program	23*	2	23*	19
A successful football program	24*	1	24*	21

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While keeping in mind that the sample of parents used in this study may be more knowledgeable and more involved that some parents, educators seem more likely to see the typical parent as a "problem" parent. Other research 4 indicates most parent-teacher contact is in the context of a crisis or problem. This "squeaky wheel" phenomenon no doubt contributes to the negative perceptions educators appear to have of parents.

Recommendations

These results generate a number of recommendations for educators:

1. Educators need a variety of means to have contact with parents on a non-problem basis. These means must be appropriate to the community; possibilities are teacher-parent socials, a teacher welcoming phone call or letter at the start of a school year, home visits by teachers, parent volunteers in the classroom, and parents as members of a study committee.
2. Educators (in cooperation with central office officials) can conduct several mini-studies each year to learn parent (and community member) opinions and attitudes about pending school issues or problems.
3. Educators can be advised that the focus of parent-teacher conferences should be as much or more on a student's strengths as compared to a student's deficits or weaknesses. This focus will more easily enable teachers to develop partnerships with parents to benefit students.
4. Educators should include information about the processes of education (why certain procedures and actions are necessary and benefit students) in regular newsletters to parents to help them understand how processes contribute to outcomes.

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by John E. Forde

A Public School System Benefits from a University Partnership

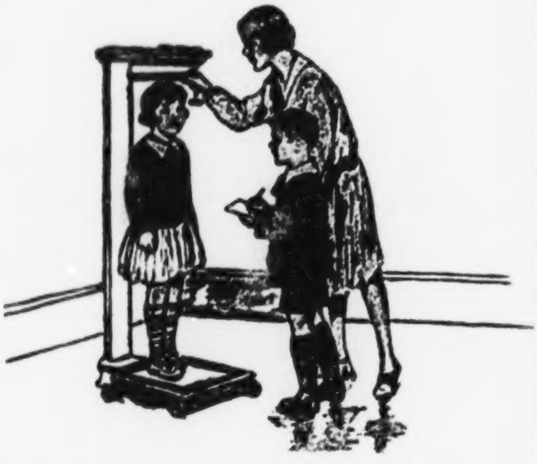
Mississippi State University granted funds to the Starkville, Miss. School District for the school years 1994-95 and 1995-96 for school-community relations activities. This article is a history of how this partnership came to fruition.

As a concerned and interested parent of a kindergartner during the 1993-94 school year, I frequently discussed my professional interest in the overall importance of public relations and marketing in the Starkville schools with my son's principal, Dr. Joan Butler. In my initial contact with the schools, I became involved with a local support organization, Parents for Public Schools. I came to realize that many people either do not know the benefits of the local public schools or have made little effort to learn. Dr. Butler and I discussed the need for some sort of ongoing public relations program for our schools.

Many parents had been involved during that year in helping our kindergarten staff prepare a U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Award application, resulting in the only Mississippi school to win the award that year.

Public relations concepts and strategies were in the minds of many local school officials, parents, and community members as a result of the team effort that won the Blue Ribbon. When funding for school partnerships was made available during the fall of 1994 through a new Public Schools Partnership Program at the university, Dr. Butler and I initiated a meeting with four other university faculty to determine what type of public relations, communication, or marketing program would be appropriate for our school district. (By this time, Joan Butler had been named director of the district's family-centered programs.) The university faculty and administrators on this committee had extensive experience in public relations, communication, marketing, and research related to public schools and educational organizations, and we decided to apply for funding for a PR program. The combination of experiences and expertise proved to be a success factor for the program.

While writing the grant proposal, we collected information and letters of support from various groups other than the Starkville School District, including the area's chamber of commerce, visitors and convention council, county economic development authority, county hospital, Parents for Public Schools organization, and the local Foundation for Public Education. This variety of encouragement showed widespread support for the proposed program throughout the community, and university and school district officials approved the initiation of the program and funded it.



"A Model Community Marketing and Communication Program: Building Coalitions for Public Education" as the title of the first year's program was developed for several reasons. The terms of marketing and communication were used because some citizens might not appreciate or understand the term public relations. We also wanted to emphasize team building or group cooperation (coalitions) for education.

Developing the Plan

Five goals to improve the offerings and public perceptions of Starkville Public Schools were developed:

1. Conduct internal and external research through focus groups and surveys to determine perceptions of the public schools by various publics. This would determine educational issues to be addressed through later communication strategies.
2. Develop an integrated, internal and external, communication marketing plan.
3. Coordinate support groups for the public schools to determine how each group contributes, and how elements could be coordinated and enhanced to assist with the overall strategic plans for the schools.
4. Continue the successful elements of the initial one-year program through coordination by a person or a department staff member responsible for communication, marketing, public relations, and related areas.
5. Have an impact on long-term improvements in attitude change about the public schools by all targeted publics. These changes in attitudes should lead to changes in behavior concerning enrollment in the public schools, personal and financial support, involvement, and overall improvement of the educational experience for all students.

Although many of these goals are long-term, continuing, and difficult to measure, the methods used in the program directly assist in providing information to school officials. Surveys, enrollment data, call-in comments, media analyses, and similar research methods can be used to determine problem areas and provided necessary guidelines for determining necessary changes.

About the Starkville School District

- Starkville student population, K-12 — 4.072
- Employees—600, 271 of which are classroom teachers
- Racial mix of students—61% black, 34% white, 5% other
- Teachers belong to State Assn. of Educators and State Professional Educators Assn.
- Teachers do not have the legal right to strike in the state
- State law allows boards to raise up to three mills for capital improvements, and operational mills up to 7% per year. Other additions to the tax rate must be approved by 60% of voters in a referendum
- The Starkville board had not raised the tax rate from 1990 to 1995
- Dr. Larry Box, superintendent, has an advisory council of 14 teachers, elected by their peers, that meets monthly to share ideas to improve the district.

The program's operating team consisted of five university faculty, two school administrators and three interns who worked at various intervals during the year. The team's work that year included these specific activities:

- Produced two district-wide newsletters
- Placed numerous news and feature stories in local media outlets
- Implemented four surveys (of students, parents, school personnel and community members) and provided reports of results
Implemented a call-in telephone line for use by parents and the general public
- Completed focus group research and a summary report
- Produced and distributed flyers to encourage students, parents, school personnel and community members to use the telephone call-in Response Line
- Assisted with promotional activities, such as advertising and publicizing events, of

Nature of the Partnership Program

"University officials approached us with the idea of the partnership program because they were very interested in helping the community improve. They also wanted to continue building university and school ties that had developed through other programs," according to Larry Box, Starkville School District superintendent.

For the 1994-95 school year, Mississippi State University dedicated $100,000 for its faculty to work with several public school districts. Starkville's program "A Model Community Marketing and Communication Program: Building Coalitions for Public Education," was funded by the university at $6,028 and by the district at $5,000. These funds allowed for the collaboration among five university faculty, two administrators from the district and three interns. Starkville is one of the public school districts in the immediate vicinity of the university.

During the second year of the program, the university provided $7,000 to continue the program with two university faculty, two administrators from the district and two interns.

Major outcomes from the project for the district have included increased communication and improved relationships with various publics, increased parent and community member involvement with schools, development of a comprehensive school-community relations program (including probable hiring of a director to continue efforts), and assistance with passage of a bond issue for improved facilities. Rewards for university interns included work experiences to supplement academics, development of personal networks with school and university participants, and completion of portfolio materials to use for future job interviews. Advantages gained for university faculty participants included professional practice to stay updated in the field, opportunities for numerous related presentations, and publication of numerous related articles.

Superintendent Box says that relationships developed through this program and benefits for the district students, both in increased understanding and new facilities, will last many years. "This effort has been a true win-win situation for all of those involved: district students and personnel, university interns and faculty, and various community members."

Detailed summary reports for each year's program were compiled for reference use by committee members, district administrators, school board members, community leaders involved with the schools, and the interns. A video was produced for public information and staff recruitment. A copy of the summary reports and the video are available from the author for $40 (to cover costs). Make checks payable to

other support groups

- Assisted the district with a successful bond campaign.

Assisting with a Bond Referendum Campaign

For several years prior to the start of this program, school officials had been contemplating an appropriate time to begin a bond campaign. Enrollment was at capacity, updated technology was needed, and athletic facilities lacked important elements. While the original marketing program was designed to enhance overall public relations for the district, the team decided to add elements to support the board's decision to hold a bond referendum.

We developed a Public Relations Committee with about 45 people, and then further divided that committee into subcommittees based on our activities. A major goal from the beginning of this effort was to involve as many people as possible. Our rationale was: If a person became involved on a committee, then he or she would vote yes, encourage other people to vote yes, and become regularly involved with the public schools.

A kick-off rally was attended by some 600 people, which showed the overwhelming support of the bond referendum specifically and the schools in general.

Bond issue communication efforts included donated advertising materials, a variety of promotional spots on local radio and television stations, three large billboards, interviews with campaign leaders for newspaper articles, many visual aides such as yard signs and posters, letters to the editor and a live call-in television show.

Several other activities operated in the success of the bond referendum campaign and the overall program that year. A Community Goals Conference sponsored by the local chamber of commerce was held on the university's campus with sessions on topics of education, crime, race relations, recreation, economic development, and youth services. These areas were closely related to the goals of the school district's program and the bond referendum.

Also, during the previous summer, residents had approved a 2% restaurant tax to build a sportsplex facility, to promote tourism, and to support economic development. A large local church had recently implemented a successful capital campaign fund drive to build a family life center. Many of the people involved in these two efforts applied their experience to our bond issue efforts.

The overall outcomes from the bond issue were positive. The vote passed by a ratio of 65-35. A real bonus was seeing many people who were previously apathetic or uninvolved become supportive of local public schools after their participation.

Although there was some vocal opposition to the bond issue from several local groups and individuals, there was no outward, organized effort to defeat the issue.

Throughout the overall partnership project and the bond campaign, attributes of public schools were emphasized, but any problems were also discussed. In addition to promoting the benefits of the local public schools, a coordinating function of the grant project was to identify and seek solutions to problems, such as better two-way communication among all schools and various publics. Even high quality programs will be misunderstood if not explained thoroughly. A multi-faceted approach is needed to provide win-win situations for all groups involved.

Year Two

The second year of the project was funded to continue and refine the work begun in the first. By now, the district staff had become accustomed to having outside assistance from university professors and interns. Many of the district's teachers and administrators became more involved and adept in helping decide on ways to promote various one- and two-way communication efforts.

Outcomes included the production of three district newsletters, continuation of the telephone call-in line, additional articles in the media, and completion of analysis of earlier research.

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During the second year, a local Foundation for Public Education became involved. The foundation funded the production of a video tape. The video's purpose was to present an overview of the district, its benefits and strengths. The tapes were widely distributed throughout the community, and were and continue to be used to recruit new employees (of the school district as well as businesses and organizations in the community) and to orient parents new to the community and parents of preschool students.

Summary

Although future funding opportunities from the university are unknown, the Starkville School District plans to continue the activities initiated during the past two years. Coordination will be handled by a professional employed by the district and funded by grants. Project workers not employed full time by the district—such as the university professors— will continue to advise as needed.

Our projects have incorporated nine activities or group relationships that we believe relate directly to quality schools: partnerships, surveys/polls, senior citizen involvement, advisory committees, parent involvement, volunteers, achievement recognition, positive internal relations and climate, and building coalitions/consensus.

Some Starkville School District officials, including the superintendent, had seen the need for improved school-community relations prior to the funded activities and bond issue campaign. The district had been moving toward a greater emphasis in that area, and now more school district personnel, parents, and community leaders have expressed that interest in continuing the projects by having a professional coordinate school-community relations.

Most of the proposed activities would not have been accomplished without the committee members' work. The collaboration of many of these involved publics should continue as one method to assist local school officials in proactively determining the pulse of the community. This momentum of goodwill, enhanced by the projects and bond campaign, should be maintained and continued. We do not consider these efforts and accomplishments so far as conclusions, but as beginnings for effective school-community relations and improved educational opportunities for students.

John E. Forde is assistant professor of communication and head of the public relations sequence in the College of Arts and Sciences at Mississippi State University (P.O. Drawer PR, Mississippi State, MS 39762). Parent of a third grader and kindergarten student, Dr. Forde was the primary administrator for the Starkville program and chair of the PR Committee for the Starkville schools bond referendum.

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by John R. Ban

BOOST STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT BY MAKING PARENTS PARTNERS

The surest way to raise the level of student learning is to reshape parents into true partners in their children's education. This can be achieved through parent education and leadership programs, in which parents learn specific strategies to work with their children at home.

The drive to push ahead and make schools the standard bearer of reform efforts is underway in many communities in America. Schools officials bark out signals to improve learning: bring in more computers, beef up staff developmental efforts, install quality controls, institute site-based management techniques, raise academic standards, upgrade the monitoring of pupil progress, and refine instructional practices. These are but a few of the fronts mapped out in the effort to raise student performance in the schools.

The bald fact is that the task cannot be accomplished on these fronts alone. It is becoming increasingly clear that another front needs to be deployed by officials in education. With little time to spare, decisions have to be made to move up sufficient forces to win the fight here. This front is the home.

> *Anything short of casting parents as the centerpiece in the school reform movement will result in the continuation of the problems we have today.*

Throughout the fierce debate on improving learning in the schools, the role of the home has become lost, like a pebble in deep grass. The irony is that just about every study on educational reform cites the importance of the home and strongly recommends that parents be moved from the sidelines to the playing field of their children's education. It is now widely acknowledged that what is done in the home with children can have even a greater effort on their learning than what is done in the schools. Parents are powerful engines to drive learning in the classroom.

Despite these acknowledgments, the truth is that home involvement in learning, with precious few exceptions, has not received high priority on the list of concerns of educators. In public, they rave about the importance of parent participation. In private, this subject draws yawns.

We need changes in the home to improve learning in the schools. These changes should be geared toward reshaping parents into true partners in their children's learning. Anything short of casting parents as the centerpiece in the school reform movement will result in the continuation of the problems we have today.

There are several reasons for funneling educational resources into parent education programs.

- We cannot fix education unless we fix the family. It is here where children spend their formative years, when values and attitudes are formed. Potentially, the home has the strongest influence on a child's attitude toward learning. Attitude, in turn, shapes readiness. And readiness leads to improved

school performance. The family, not the schools, is the key to school readiness.

- The number of households and the number of parents far exceed the number of educators. Parents constitute a much larger army for bringing about educational change. That army is out there, ready to help. Like any army, it needs leaders, support services, and resources.
- Children spend only a small portion of their time exposed to the influences of schools. Especially when they are young, children spend the bulk of their time in the home. Parents are, therefore, in the best position to work with their children on a one-to-one personal basis to strengthen their study habits.

In American education, the great tragedy is that countless parents use only a small fraction of their time monitoring their children's schoolwork. Such negligence results in a monumental brain waste in our country. To turn this around, what parents need to do is spend more time with their children and assist them to become successful in school.

Teachers everywhere will tell you that one-quarter to one-half of all their students come to class unprepared to do the academic work required in class. This is a problem that should not be addressed by schools alone; it should also be addressed by parents.

Numerous factors influence a child's readiness to learn, but the key one is the home. Certainly, there are environmental factors such as neighborhoods, playmates, and noise pollution that affect one's predisposition to learn. There are also school factors such as inspirational teachers and a positive school climate. What is more, there is a multitude of personal factors that have an impact on a child's school readiness: intelligence level, mental and physical development, and degree of maturation. All these factors, however, are overshadowed by the home.

One way to address this problem is to expand parent education programs that center on student learning and give such programs top priority in school districts around the nation. One such program was designed as a prototype for an urban school district in Indiana. The people behind the program were serious about involving parents in their children's school life and decided to do something about it. The program is called PASS, standing for Parents Assuring Student Success.

PASS emphasized that what politicians and policy makers do to improve the school matters less than what parents do in their individual homes. By far, parents can be more instrumental in elevating the plane of student learning in school than the infusion of additional money or the enactment of new laws. The trick in bringing this about is to create a master plan containing a rich storehouse of initiatives that parents can be trained to use at home when working with their children. PASS was proposed as one of these initiatives.

As a parent initiative, PASS rests on four assumptions:

1. Improvement in a child's learning will occur more rapidly when parents convert their living places into learning places.
2. All parents, regardless of their circumstances and problems, can learn the techniques to become "learning facilitators," or teachers in the home.
3. The pathway to a child's successful performance in school comes from learning good study habits. These can be learned in the home from Mom and Dad.
4. Parents can best learn the techniques for teaching their children study skills by attending a series of workshops with other parents where interaction and reinforcement have a chance to spark parent interest.

PASS spells out a three-step approach in assisting parents to become learning facilitators. Convincing parents that they can indeed make a difference in their children's learning is critical to the success of efforts to improve student learning. That they can become a positive force in their children's schoolwork is a point that needs to be pounded home time and time again. Parents are what they believe. If they can be persuaded to believe that they have a strong moral and legal obligation to take charge of their children's learning, they will be inclined to do that.

The second step details how parents can restructure the home for learning. No matter how modest the home, it can easily be transformed into a study center where children feel comfortable in performing their schoolwork.

The third step in parents becoming learning facilitators at home involves spending time and making the effort to learn specific study skills. Once learned, these can then be taught to children. The largest share of PASS is structured to train parents in learning selected study skills.

Study skills refer to reading, writing, doing homework, time management, taking notes, preparing for examinations, and the like. These skills are the key to school success; they make learning easier for children. They are transferable to life after school.

The specific objectives of PASS are to:

1. Fire up parent attitudes about responsibilities in teaching children good study habits;
2. Show parents how to convert their home into an environment for learning;
3. Teach parents specific strategies helping their children manage their time, listen to instruction, concentrate in class, study a textbook, prepare for and take tests, take notes and organize information, develop their memory and thinking skills, and acquire strong reading habits.

These strategies have been arranged in a modular format for parent study groups. Each module is organized in an easy-to-follow step-by-step study outline. Highlighted are a focus, purpose, a specific study skill, and a reflection on that skill. Information about that skill is presented to parents so that they will become literate in that skill. Then, exercises are provided to practice that skill. When trained in this manner, a parent can become a learning facilitator or a home tutor. The intent is not to train parents or replace teachers; rather, it is to assist teachers by rehearsing parents to ready their children for learning in the classroom, thus making the job of teachers easier.

> *If parents can be persuaded to believe they have a strong moral and legal obligation to take charge of their children's learning, they will be inclined to do that.*

Studying together in familiar surroundings results in parents learning from each other and sharing experiences that stem from working with their children. It is well known that social learning creates a powerful network of fellowship that remains long after formal study sessions have ended. Such a support system can provide a valuable help-line to parents who sincerely desire to make a difference in their children's education.

As a parent training program, PASS uses five strategies. A strategy refers to the tactic for carrying out a plan.

- **Strategy One involves offering this parent education program in a series of seven to ten workshops in the neighborhood of the parents.** Parents tend to feel more comfortable meeting with their neighbors at a site within walking distance from their homes. Furthermore, workshop times and days should be determined by the working and living schedules of people in the neighborhood.
- **Strategy Two calls for all parent workshops to be planned by a parent planning team.** School administrators and teachers can identify parents with leadership abilities and appoint them to sit on this team. This core group should have the responsibility to make all the important decisions about the parent training program. In this way, parents will develop a sense of program ownership. Decisions, likewise, need to be made about workshop meeting schedules, publicity about the program, child care, transportation, hospitality, attendance, fellowship activities, evaluation and followup.
- **Strategy Three deals with parent leadership training.** PASS should be a parent-run program. Educators should not run the program. As

such, parents need training so that they can conduct the workshop sessions and lead discussion among parent participants. Those parents with leadership promise should be given a crash course in learning how to work with adult learners and how to lead them through the material in PASS. This special training will assist parent workshop leaders to adjust to the pressures of conducting these study sessions.

What politicians and policy makers do to improve the schools matters less than what parents do in their individual hours.

- **Strategy Four stresses the social nature of parent workshops.** To be appealing to others, social activities need to be provided along with learning activities at all parent workshops. Parents will be more inclined to attend study sessions that include fun, food, and fellowship. The social nature of workshops should be heavily advertised. Door prizes, music, raffles, snacks, and hands-on projects are sweeteners that can draw parents to workshops.
- **Strategy Five addresses the most serious deficiency—parents who stand in most need of help in working with their children.** Many are poor parents. Others are parents with enormous personal problems. A few are simply neglectful parents, disinterested when it comes to their children's education.

These hard-to-reach parents are difficult to recruit for parenting programs. More often than not, their children are at-risk of failing, underachieving, or misbehaving in the classroom. Every school has a generous supply of these parents. Principals know them well.

Strategy Five targets these parents; they are given the highest priority in PASS. Because of their special problems, they deserve preferential treatment. To start, invitations to attend workshop sessions should be extended to them from the office of the school superintendent. This correspondence should be followed by a personal letter from the principal of the building where their children attend school. The letter should politely encourage the parent to participate in the parent workshops and appeal to their love for their children. PASS contains such form letters.

After these formal invitations, the parent planning team should establish a parent escort who is to call these parents and personally pick them up to walk with them to study sessions. If baby-sitting services are needed, they should be made available. It is important to remove all excuses these parents could possibly give to avoid attending parenting workshops. Every parent planning team is urged to explore a wide variety of options for drawing these parents into these study sessions.

Expecting educators to single-handedly improve learning is not realistic. This is because learning is influenced by so many forces outside the school, especially the home. Many reputable organizations and studies have clamored for the home to help out.

PASS is one plan that hammers on the theme that parents can make a difference, and that improving a child's study skills is within the reach of the house.

John R. Ban is professor of education at Indiana University, Northwest (3400 Broadway, Gary IN 46408). He has been president of a school board and chairman of a metropolitan police commission. He provides details about PASS workshops in his text, Parents Assuring School Success, published by the National Education Service, 1610 West Third Street, Bloomington, IN 47402. (812) 336-7700. $18.95. This article is reprinted from Contemporary Education (available for $12—$15 foreign—from school of education, Indiana State University Terre Haute, IN 47809; no purchase orders can be accepted).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Vol. 17, No. 3, August 1996, had an article I have read and read again. Otis K. Lovette spelled out the reasons school costs have increased so much in the past 20 years. Every teacher, every principal and every superintendent plus every school board member should read this article and learn it by heart. Then, they should tell the public about it, with detailed explanations of where the money goes, and why it goes there.

Why haven't school people been telling this story? Perhaps they didn't know it. But, perhaps they don't want the public to know all the things they do. Why? Perhaps they are afraid that if average citizens knew, they would be pressuring their senators and representatives, and state departments of education to get rid of some of the tasks. Many citizens would object to spending money by having to pay $9 an hour for a non-teacher to sit by a special student to control that child. Others would object to hiring a full time interpreter for one child in a grade. Teachers and school staff who believe in this program might fear the repercussions. But, the public has a right to know and to judge. Right?

I think your magazine or journal is doing a great service to school administrators. If they follow just a few of the many ideas your authors (and the editor) throw out, the Journal is worth the price.

A. Conrad Posz
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Dr. Posz is a former communications professor at Michigan State University and was director of education at Art Instruction School in Minneapolis.

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Write the editor of your interest in board membership.

by Robert Blaine

We Have Met the Enemy and Guess Who It Is?

Consider all the factors that influence public schools and we must admit that we are getting good value for our education investment dollars.

In April 1983, the U. S. Commission on Excellence, under the direction of then-Secretary of Education Terrel Bell, issued its report A Nation at Risk. In the text was a statement that shot into the heart of public education: "...if an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war."

Since that time, I feel I have been dodging bullets of criticism about the job we in public education are doing, and I admit I have been winged a time or two. But I firmly believe today's U. S. public school system is as good as it can be, given the level of moral and financial support our society is willing to give.

Have politicians and critics learned since 1983 that government cannot legislate improved schools? Time and again we have been given legislative mandates to make schools better, yet we remain under the gauntlet of mediocrity suggested in A Nation at Risk.

Too often, school is not the U. S. teenager's full-time job... Employers could send a powerful message to teens if they would refuse to employ any who cannot produce an attendance record of 95 percent and a GPA of 3.0.

Focus on the High School is Misplaced

Our national impatience to improve schools through quick-fix remedies has caused critics to focus on the high school. High school graduation requirements were increased without considering how teachers teach and how students learn. It would have been wiser to begin our reform efforts on early childhood education and elementary school.

We forgot the classroom teachers are the true change agents, and we failed to develop programs to help them become better teachers.

Frankly, I feel the "failures" schools have experienced since the 1960s are not completely their own. If we consider some important factors that have influenced schools in recent years, we would have to admit we are getting good value for our investment dollars in education.

The school is a micro-community, the most accurate reflection of a neighborhood one can imagine. If we look through the schoolhouse window, we see our society. If we are unhappy with our schools, it is because we are unhappy with our society.

Many believe it is easier to fix schools than to fix society, but is this so? The school is the only institution in our society that is consistently asked to "fix" what is wrong — from student drug and alcohol abuse to child abuse, parental neglect, segregation, poor nutrition, violence, teen pregnancy, and lack of values. Our schools are caught in conflicts over social issues, which inhibits their ability to focus on reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Times Have Changed

The baggage students carry to school today is very different than it was in 1955. June Cleaver — homemaker has become June Cleaver — wage earner; parents have far less time to devote to the problems of their children and ask the school to assume more responsibility for their needs.

U. S. society is getting a good value for its education dollar. Taking into account all the issues schools face, I believe schools have maintained a significant level of proficiency.

1. We frequently forget the influence of colleges and their entrance requirements on public school curricula: ACTs, SATs, GPAs, and class rank influence course content and teaching. These are such powerful influences that schools often postpone addressing other curriculum deficiencies; consequently, they do not adequately prepare students who are not planning to attend college.

Because ACT and SAT scores are often used to measure a school's success, we tend to strengthen our college prep curriculum at the expense of courses that prepare students for the world of work. School reform efforts that address job entry, tech prep, or vocational application should be considered.

2. Public schools must comply with special education requirements that demand more and more time and resources. We are doing a creditable job of meeting these youngsters' needs, but the resources required are staggering.

3. Reformers never seem to take into account the influence of the student activities program. The energy we spend on student activities is exhaustive, and stretches the high school significantly.

I would challenge anyone to identify another nation that attempts to educate the whole child as U. S. schools do. Long ago, we bought into the 1918 Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education's "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education." These

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principles encouraged the "wise use of leisure" and "ethical character"; from these grew the comprehensive activities programs we know today.

If we are unhappy with our schools, it is because we are unhappy with society... The school is a micro-community, the most accurate reflection of a neighborhood one can imagine.

If we were to advocate the discontinuation of student activities in our secondary schools to focus all our resources and energy upon academics, I dare say there would be an uproar. Yet, we never seem to acknowledge that no other school system in the world devotes such intensity to student activities.

4. The international comparisons that have been the focal point of critics and reformers are not reasonable. Indeed, comparisons of the U. S. students with the international student community provide us with the fourth goal of America 2000, that our students be first in the world in math and science by the year 2000.

There are significant hurdles to overcome, issues that I believe will prevent us from reaching this goal. We are a nation of many languages and sub-cultures — the only nation in the world that even attempts to educate all people, regardless of their station in life, learning ability, race, creed, or color.

With all the differences among nations, I am amazed that so many people persist in wanting to compare our "scores." It is simply not appropriate to do so. The United States may never be first in the world in math or science because we have placed our educational priorities elsewhere.

5. The factor that has received little attention, especially from the business community, centers around the allegation that our students cannot do the tasks the business community requires of its employees.

I cannot remember the last time an employer asked a student to provide a copy of his or her high school transcript as part of a job application. I cannot recall any employer of our high school students asking them to supply an attendance record or grade report as a condition of continued employment.

Employers would send a powerful message to teens if they would refuse to employ any teenager who cannot produce an attendance record of 95 percent and a GPA of 3.0. If teens cannot maintain those levels of academic progress, school should be their full-time job.

No other society in the world has a teenage culture that spends as much time working to support a car or personal "wants" as does the United States. Too often, school is not the U. S. teenager's full-time job.

Businesses should support our mission by insisting that current and future employees do the best job they can in the classroom, and use the transcript as a tool in the application and employment process. Furthermore, they could help many schools acquire the ever-changing technology that too often cannot be funded by public schools.

I like to share with business folks an analogy with an automaker. When manufacturers design and produce a new car, they spare no expense developing specifications for the plans, materials, and manufacture of that car. If any of the materials that are going into the car do not meet manufacturer's specifications, they are discarded.

The school must manufacture its product (the student) with whatever "material" it is given. We are responsible for producing more and more expensing and versatile "models." We do not discard any shortcomings a student may have; rather, we attempt to pound, shave, bend and shape the material so the student product is the best we can produce.

6. We have not even begun to measure the influence of television on U. S. teenagers and on their schooling. The number of hours many teens devote to watching television is staggering, and these hours spent before the TV screen can be devastating to our teenagers' creativity

and value systems.

Teachers who challenge students to read or write — to allow their imaginations to flourish — have a difficult time. To be blunt, many families would do well to pull the plug on the TV and hide the remote — at least until the weekend.

7. No one can calculate the devastating effects modern social pathological behaviors have had on our students. Studies done in the 1980s and 1990s provide us with jolting statistics regarding teenage drug and alcohol use and abuse. Teenage drinking threatens the life and future of too many of our young people. Teenage pregnancy and a social welfare system that rewards irresponsible teenage sexual behavior are deplorable. Sexual diseases are no longer an inconvenience; they now can kill.

The increasing numbers of parents who abdicate responsibility for the welfare of their children have a dramatic influence on their students' attitudes toward school.

The growth of gangs should trouble every American. Many youngsters today turn to the gang for the family relations and support they do not find at home.

People can no longer flee the dangers of drive-by shootings and other such dangers by escaping from cities. They affect suburbs and rural areas as well and add incredible problems to the already beleaguered public school.

All these social phenomena have dramatic effects on our schools. They strike at the principles of the comprehensive American high school that we have tried to protect for so long. These social pathologies exist in the school, and anyone who looks through the window will see them.

8. We are a nation of immigrants; continuing to integrate our people, of all backgrounds, has

challenged America since its birth. In our third century, we continue to search for ways to bring our people together.

The public school has been a major player in this drama since the 1950s, when the Supreme Court struck down the principle of "separate but equal" education. Since then, efforts to accommodate racial and ethnic diversity have had a profound impact on our ability to help youngsters learn.

This challenge involves all Americans of every race, color, religion, and ethnic origin. It influences our values, mores, and culture. It is not something the public schools can accomplish by themselves.

9. Issues of inequity in funding should strike at the conscience of the American people. A local school funding referendum is one of the few taxes on which a citizen can vote. It is not hard to figure out that those communities who can afford better schools will have them, and those who cannot, will not.

Many families would do well (for their children) to pull the plug on the TV and hide the remote — at least until the weekend.

The Question Remains — How Much Are We Willing To Invest?

Are we willing to invest the resources it will require to change our schools? Back in the 1950s, the threat of world domination by the Soviet Union spurred the United States to legislate the National Defense Education Act. There was an arms race and a race to the moon, and we spent millions of dollars on our schools to win the race. As a nation, we shuddered at the possibility of not being Number One in space or in the arms race.

We won the arms race and the race to the moon because there was a public will and determination to win. During World War II, national leaders and the American people were determined to win the war, and the schools of the '40s and '50s benefited from that sense of determination. In recent years, national leaders have been dedicated to the goal of de-emphasizing the federal role in public education, and the public's will to support our public schools has been compromised.

Are we as determined today as we were in the '40s and '50s? We do not have an arms race or a race to the moon or a similar crisis to drive us. Our nation does not face the military threat of another nation. As Pogo once said, "We have met the enemy, and he is us." How prophetic Pogo was.

It is my belief that today's schools are caught in this historical dilemma. Is it possible that the Achilles heel of America is our desire to be Number One? As a nation, do we have the desire and the will to accept the challenge of that goal?

> *Because ACT and SAT scores are often used to measure a school's success, we tend to strengthen our college prep curriculum at the expense of courses that prepare students for the world of work.*

Is it easier to live vicariously through the achievements of million-dollar sports heroes than to invest in the schools that, in the end, could help us address some of our nation's problems? We are spending just about what we want on education, and we seem to prefer to spend more money on ourselves. Maybe the investment of the individualized curriculum of the early '70s is paying dividends for us today that far exceed our intentions.

10 Suggestions to Consider:

I offer some ideas for us to contemplate as we look to America 2000 and our lofty educational goals for the 21st century.

- We must remember that genuine reform begins at home. We would all do well to not pay too much attention to the critics who raise national issues that are not germane to our schools. We must deal with the difficulties in our own schools.
- We must invest a percentage of our education dollars on staff development. We must give new and veteran teachers skills in helping today's youth learn, grow, and mature. The deficiencies of staff development initiatives absent in the '80s must be corrected in the '90s.
- We must accurately define the core concepts and key skills we want our teens to know and be able to do. We must put a rudder on curriculum and plan a course for the future rather than drift about as we have for many years. That may be the rub, because it is extremely difficult for us to reach consensus on what all students should know and be able to do, and still protect the interests of the individual.
- We must hold learners accountable for what we are able to determine they should know and be able to do. We must tell our students they will not be able to go to step B until they have mastered step A. We must encourage parents to be players in their teenager's education and not abdicate their responsibility.
- We must develop appropriate curriculum for non-college bound students, and that curriculum must be connected with the expectations and needs of business.
- We must no longer hold the school solely accountable for solving many of the social issues discussed in this paper. Government, the church, business, philanthropic organizations, and the public must accept proportionate responsibility to achieve our goals.
- We would do well to develop meaningful and honest public information programs to tell our constituents what is happening in our schools, what our achievements are, and what we must do to improve.
- We must no longer rely on real estate and personal property taxes for a disproportionate share of funding for education if we are to address access and equity issues.
- We must redirect the emphasis many of our schools place on student activities. Although student activities may very well be an important dimension of the secondary school, they should not be the driving force behind our mission.
- We must recruit and pay for schoolhouse leadership, and disengage the principal from

management responsibilities. If we truly want instructional leadership, we must focus the principalship on the improvement of instruction and curriculum issues and diminish the requirements we place on the position related to non-instructional issues.

We may well be "a nation at risk." But I do not believe it is because of our schools, especially if one considers the obstacles the modern school is asked to overcome. I believe our 20th century public schools have done their job based on the principle of educational opportunity for all people. U. S. achievements in this century are a testimony to that reality.

The schools have achieved their success in proportion to the financial commitment and will of the people. The "unfriendly foreign power" A Nation at Risk refers to, as Pogo suggests, may very well be us. It may take an "act of war" equal to or greater than that we expended during the Persian Gulf war to achieve the goals of America 2000.

Are we more willing to mobilize our nation's resources to stop a demagogue than to invest in our future?

Robert Blaine is principal of Raytown South High School, Raytown, Missouri (1305 Mic-O-Say, Blue Springs, MO 64015). He is a past president of the board of directors of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. This article is reprinted, with permission, from the NASSP Bulletin, published nine times a year by NASSP, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091. Single back copies are $15.

Children First, No Matter What... Is the Choice Always So Clear?

A principal must deal with an incompetent teacher who has become seriously ill.

by Marc P. Levesque

The children were always first in the mind of Principal Dorighty. She never thought twice about telling teachers how important the students were, and that it was their professional duty to make every attempt to connect with each child in their classes. Dorighty had a well-earned reputation among the faculty for being a child-centered administrator. No matter what the situation, the junior high principal always took the time to listen to youths. During the day, she spent much of her time in corridors, classrooms, and the school cafetorium observing them reciting, studying, relaxing, and playing.

It was not uncommon to see her surrounded by students, giving them "high fives" as they walked through the front door. In a short time, she had gained the trust and respect of many, if not most, of the students at Dubois Junior High School. When principal Dorighty was called upon to evaluate a pupil's progress or behavior, she would also consider outside influences in that pupil's life. She believed that one of the keys to success was the ability to connect with student and parents, and wanted her faculty to put the children first in any deliberations that might affect their young lives.

> *Principal Dorighty's propensity to favor students over staff often troubled her, because she knew that sometimes she might be unfair to a given teacher.*

Five years passed in the administrative life of Principal Anne Dorighty, when the opportunity for a promotion arose offering principalship experience at the same level in a fairly large, metropolitan school.

Excited by the opportunity, she pursued this challenge with considerable vigor and was hired as the new principal at Hope Junior High. Her enthusiasm quickly won the support of the faculty. Indeed, it was her fervor that impressed the members of the site-based team interviewing her for the slot.

Soon though, some of this support became rather tepid as they quickly learned that the principal's child-centeredness frequently put her at odds with a teacher, when a student might actually be at fault in a question of discipline. In other instances, as long as the teachers did not involve her in such incidents, whether academic or behavioral related, and settled matters by fully considering the needs, interests, and abilities of their students, Principal Dorighty gave them her full support.

Soon, the administrator was provided with an opportunity to replace the school's departing assistant principal. To balance the scales of fairness, she made ever effort to hire a person whose strengths were working with faculty. Dorighty's propensity to favor students over staff often troubled her, because she knew that sometimes she might be unfair to a given teacher. Realizing that she would never change that focus, she decided that the next best move was to temper it.

Marie Time, a 30-year veteran who had helped open Hope Jr. High, was known for putting forth a minimum amount of effort in her teaching tasks.

It was not that her new assistant, John Mellow, did not like children. On the contrary, he enjoyed them so much that he and his wife had seven of their own. Having a family gave him some additional insights into certain matters that might affect teachers and students. Anne Dorighty, on the other hand, had no living children of her own; her husband and three-year-old child had died in a car accident many years before and she did not remarry.

The first couple of months into the new academic year progressed without incident. Then Principal Dorighty received the first of many calls from parents about Marie Time, a veteran who had helped open Hope Junior High School 30 years ago when she was fresh out of college. However, in recent years the once exuberant teacher had been keeping mostly to herself. Known for putting forth a minimum amount of effort in her teaching tasks, the bulk of her teaching career seemed to have survived without substantial growth. However, there had been so much turnover at Hope during its existence that few teachers and administrators took the time to examine her professionalism, and if they did, were less likely to take action as her seniority increased.

According to the teacher, her students never measured up to her standards, either in terms of academics or behavior. And they were getting worse each year, or so she told anyone who asked, peers or parents. To one of her young and inexperienced colleagues, she recently stated, "Parents are just not doing their job, and the students aren't turning in their homework the way they used to. And when they do, it's just plain sloppy."

She usually concluded such conversations with a waiver for any personal responsibility for her teaching problems. "It's not by fault. It's hard enough to teach children who don't want to learn. It's even worse when their parents couldn't care less whether they did or not." She had said this twice to Principal Dorighty when approached about the phone calls being received from parents about the teacher. Marie's nonchalance infuriated Anne, but she hid her anger behind a forced smile and tried to be as helpful to the teacher as she could.

Most of the junior high faculty could be considered young and new when compared in years and experience to Marie Time, and as a consequence, tended to respect her for her long tenure at Hope. In a large sense, she was viewed as a kind of historian for the school. The teachers also respected her for being the sole provider for her family, as her husband's employment and health had been sporadic throughout her marriage. Currently, she was struggling to finance their youngest son's second year of college. She also had the added burden of her older daughter and two young grandchildren living with her.

Everything that Principal Dorighty wanted to come naturally to the teachers at Hope was a struggle for Marie Time. Perhaps, because she had so much responsibility at home, she avoided it in school as much as she could. Her students performance on achievement tests was below par and it was always their fault, never hers. They misbehaved because the couldn't grasp a lesson or concept and that was also their

fault. It was impossible for them to meet her expectations.

Dorighty conferenced with Time on a monthly basis. And while both agreed on what had to be done, and the principal continued to support the teacher, Time's school year ended in exactly the same way as it had begun. Complaints from parents had ceased for a while; then seemed to skyrocket as the school year came to a close.

Anne Dorighty felt that Time's students had been cheated. In spite of her efforts, Marie had not become a better teacher. For the first time in her career, the principal felt that she was compromising her child-centered philosophies. So far, she had not done what was best for the students since she had not officially begun putting Time on a growth plan documenting her work performance in writing.

Both the principal and her assistant agreed on a plan of observations/walk throughs and record-keeping to build a documented case showing that it was time for the teacher to retire.

It was summer when Dorighty and her assistant, John Mellow, sat down to discuss personnel for the upcoming year. Their discussion soon focused solely on Marie Time. Both Dorighty and Mellow agreed that building a case to help show the teacher that it was time to retire would be the best step to take. They decided on a plan of observations/walk throughs and record-keeping.

Two weeks before the next school year opened, Principal Dorighty received a call from team leader Tom Guarding, a close friend of Time. Guarding wanted to come up to the school and talk to both principals about his friend, stating that the matter was

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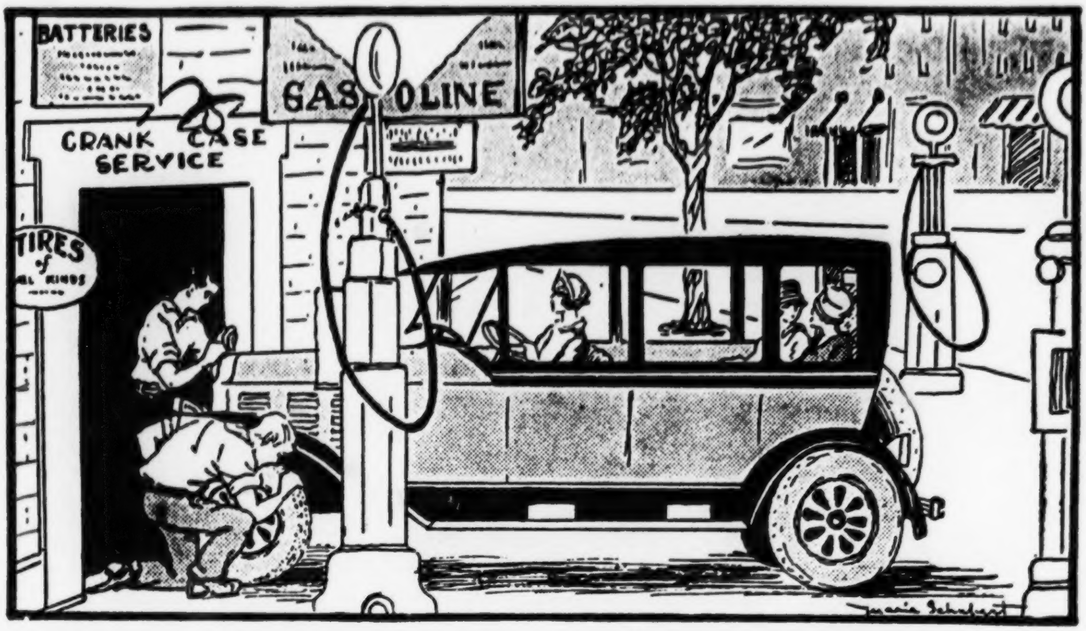

urgent. The meeting took place in Dorighty's office that same day. Guarding explained that Time had called him in tears to tell him that she had just been diagnosed with cancer. Time had also confided that her job was important to her, both financially and personally. Guarding said that Time was counting on the school to be her sanctuary through a difficult and lengthy period of observations and chemotherapy treatments.

Time's substitute, a former Hope teacher, was also a close friend of Guarding. The year began, and the students loved Russ Filling. He quickly gained their respect, and they performed exceedingly well, turning in their homework neatly and accurately on a regular basis. The parents were pleased with him too, and complimented, rather than complained, about his methods of teaching. The school days moved along smoothly, and thoughts about a documented growth plan for Marie Time seemed distant to Dorighty.

Diagnosed with cancer, Marie Time had confided to a close associate that she was counting on the school to be her sanctuary through a difficult and lengthy period of observations and chemotherapy treatments.

Then, at the beginning of the second semester, Time returned to school, pale and weak, but in high spirits. The cancer had apparently been arrested and she was exceedingly happy to be back at Hope among all her friends and familiar surroundings. Sympathetic faculty members were eager and willing to help her in any way, even taking her class whenever she showed the slightest weakness.

Without hesitation, Principal Dorighty approved of every effort the faculty made to ease the teacher's workload. Meanwhile, she hoped that Time would now have a different perspective with regard to her job and that she would be congenial with parents and receptive to the needs of her students. The teacher's behavior did improve remarkably for a while, but then began to unravel. Parents started calling and complaining, children were being sent to the main office in droves, and homework was not being performed. It appeared that Marie Time was falling back into the same previous routine.

Dorighty deplored the situation. Her philosophy was to do what was best for the students, which meant expending a certain amount of effort to meet the principal's demands. But, that was the main purpose of teaching, according to her, and Time was not a competent teacher. Feeling sorry for Marie on the one hand, and dissatisfied with her performance on the other, Dorighty herself in a bit of dilemma and more than a little compromised. The teacher certainly believed that she had the support of the faculty and could continue to function just well enough to remain teaching at Hope.

The scope of the situation had now entered another dimension. Any action taken against Time by the administration would be viewed as personal and mean-spirited in light of her new health and financial situation. Before, a plan to document and encourage her to retire seemed to be the proper course; now, however, it seemed almost unpardonable. Yet, something had to be done before the situation deteriorated any further and the children's education suffered.

Anne Dorighty had some doubts, also, about whether her assistant, who had only recently lost his mother to a bout of cancer, would be willing to support her efforts. Feeling squeezed between her responsibility to her students and their parents, and the pressures from the solidified ranks of her faculty, Dorighty's mind frantically hunted for a way out of her boxed-in situation.

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Response to Case Study in Vol. 17, No. 4

Case Study Response

by James G. Izat

The author of this case study has raised two main issues. The first is the dedication of Principal Anne Dorighty to the children of her school and the implications that this posture entails for the school's faculty. The second is the conflict that Principal Dorighty faces in ensuring that the educational needs of the students are met, while dealing with the personal needs of her recalcitrant faculty member.

The principal's identification with her students is laudable and, to an extent, should probably be emulated to a larger degree by the administrative community. But, when that concern for students interferes with an administrator providing proper support for the teaching staff, it has gone too far. An essential part of the foundation of sound teacher-student relationships is the respect that students show to the instructor, and vice versa. When the students in a school have discovered that the balance of power in the principal-student and principal-

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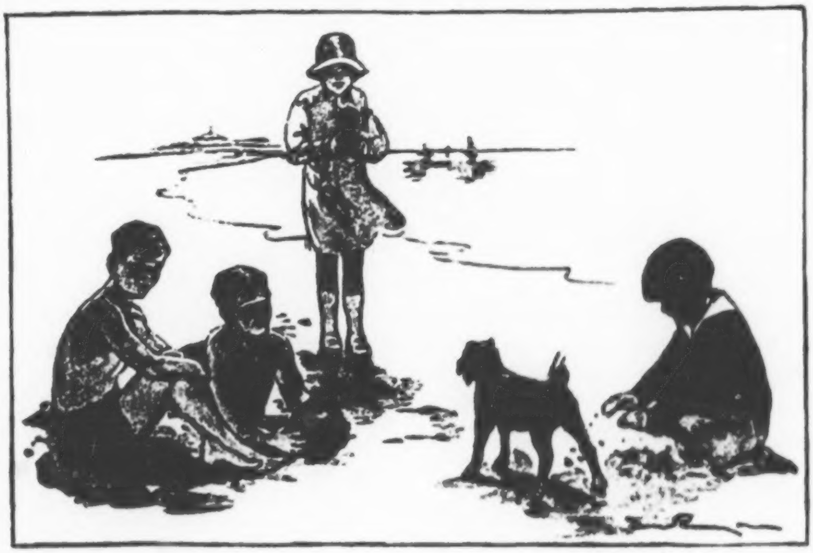

teacher relationships leans in their favor, they will inevitably exploit that situation to their benefit.

A proper balance must be struck and then maintained in a principal's empowerment of students and faculty. If in proper balance, the morale of faculty members will be undergirded as they feel the support that comes from above, and students will benefit by an increased level of instructional quality delivered by teachers who are unafraid to take a valid stand or try innovative methods.

Of immediate concern to Principal Dorighty is the incompetent performance on the part of Marie Time. The frustration expressed by both parents and students must motivate Dorighty to take action in protecting Time's students. Unfortunately, the difficulty posed by the recent ill health of the teacher makes it difficult for the principal to do this without appearing mean-spirited.

Principal Dorighty has found herself in this quandary only because she has failed to take the appropriate action at the appropriate time. Had she addressed the below-par performance of the teacher when it first became a problem for the principal, she would not be faced with having to deal negative with a teacher who is now seriously ill.

At the first sign of sub-standard performance, Dorighty should have immediately held a conference with Marie Time, outlined the areas of concern in her lack of proper performance, and together instituted a growth plan. The principal should have begun documenting the teacher's performance if future termination proceedings should be necessary.

In conclusion, Principal Dorighty's concern with her students is commendable to an extent, as long as it doesn't interfere with providing for their long term needs of self esteem, contributed to in a large way by educational accomplishment. A proper balance must be maintained between the support that a principal shows to faculty members and the concern for meeting the needs of students. And, in a situation where the needs of students are obviously at risk, as they were in the case of Marie Time, the private concerns of one teacher cannot outweigh the needs of all the students that that teacher will interact with in years to come.

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Book Reviews

by Arthur W. Steller

Books for review and requests to serve as guest book reviewer may be sent to editor Arthur W. Steller, Superintendent of Kingston City Schools, 61 Crown St., Kingston, NY 12401.

How to Handle Staff Misconduct.

By C. Edward Lawrence and Myra Vachon. Corwin Press, Inc., 2455 Telley Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320. 1995.

When there are indications of staff misconduct, educational public relations problems often occur. These problems are made even worse when school administrators mishandle the process, especially when the foul-ups become public. Then the perception is that two misdeeds have taken place. This book tells you how to improve the odds that events will proceed as they should.

The initial investigation can lay the groundwork for an effective personnel operation or for a disaster, according to these authors who have had practical experience. There is a clear outline of how to proceed from an administrative perspective for issues involving racial or gender bias; theft; fraud; insubordination; misconduct outside of school; and abusive, insulting, and profane language. Sample forms reinforce the text and guide these kinds of investigations.

Potential staff misconduct situations must be investigated, and because each circumstance is different, attorneys and other experts ought to be consulted. The authors do not sufficiently discuss this aspect. The possibility of news media involvement is not described either, which is another hole to be plugged in this guidebook. Nevertheless, the proposed steps are certainly helpful to school administrators who find themselves in the position of investigating possible staff misconduct.

The War Against the Poor.

By Herbert Gans. Basic Books, 10 East 53 St., New York, NY, 10022-5299. 1995.

School communications administrators are well aware of the debilitating effects of labels upon children, and often upon programs—setting in motion a definite shelf life for a program. Pejorative labels exist in other contexts with even more devastating consequences. This volume is relevant to educators who work with those who are poor because it describes how labels have affected millions of poor citizens in America.

The author, Herbert Gans, may be known to readers of this journal for writing *Deciding What's News*, although he is recognized by a wide audience for other books such as *The Levittowners* or *The Urban Villagers*. His scholarly credentials include serving as president of the American Sociological Association and teaching at Columbia University. Common sense and proficient writing are marks of his work, in addition to the soundness of the research.

The obsession America has with its poor population may seem to be a recent phenomenon. Gans makes the point and backs it up that America has attacked its own poor folks for a long time with stigmatizing labels. The demonization of them has occurred by naming them as "underclass," "slum dwellers," and so forth.

> Labels may be only words, but they are judgmental of normative words, which can stir institutions and individuals to punitive actions. The dangers from such labels are many, but the damage common to all behavioral labels and terms is that they focus on behavior that hides the poverty causing it, and substitutes as its cause moral or cultural or genetic failures.

Labels place people in classes based upon sharing a few attributes. In this case, the larger society is afraid of all those labeled when only a few ought to be legitimately feared. The poor population are lumped together and become scapegoats for what is wrong with the country, when often their circumstances are the outcome, not the cause.

For many school communicators, this gripping analysis will be enough to eradicate stereotypical language from one's personal repository of words for general usage. There is much more

to this work in terms of communications—the author is also recruiting wordsmiths to join his informational "debunking program" to shift the public perspective towards the poor.

Enriching the Curriculum Through Service Learning.
By Carol Kinsley and Kate McPherson, eds. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314-1453. 1995.

Education can certainly be enhanced by "...integrating community service experiences into the curriculum and connecting schools with agencies and neighborhoods..." as these learning experiences "connect students to their communities; enrich students' learning; and help them develop personally, socially, and academically."

The authors emphasize that the key to a successful community service learning program is hard work and close adherence to the quoted words of Secretary of Education Richard Riley: "Service learning is effective when it is structured to respond to both the needs of the community and the learning needs of students. The service experience must be integrated into the curriculum."

As true partnerships with the community are forged through service learning projects, a great public relations value for the schools develops. The public's perception of the schools and young people can improve and confidence in education can rise, as well as support for school bond and levy proposals. Although this booklet does not dwell on this important byproduct of community service learning, a little creativity stapled to a sound curriculum can enrich public communications.

Examples of existing service learning programs form the bulk of this publication. The resource section is well stocked with names, addresses, phone numbers, and lists of books and periodicals. Some of the present and foreseeable future challenges add to the content. This is a handy and economical booklet for anyone interested in implementing service learning.

Content of the Curriculum.
By Allan Glatthorn, ed. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, (see above). 1995.

One of the educational trends in this country receiving attention in the news media is the increased emphasis upon curriculum content. Obtaining a comprehensive view of the content of all curriculum areas has been rather difficult as the descriptions are scattered and segregated in discipline journals and books. This book meets that need.

The editor, Allan Glatthorn, is a renowned curriculum expert. He and the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development have assembled a notable group of subject specialists to summarize their particular fields. Except for the English language arts author, the experts have done a satisfactory job. Glatthorn added another chapter on the same topic to somewhat remedy this problem.

Each chapter provided enlightenment on the recurring issues in a particular content area. Research, differing opinions of experts, resources, standards, assessment techniques, and recommended structures are covered in these sections. Curriculum leaders, teachers, and other educators will find specific guidance about the content of each major element of school curriculum, and parents and non-professional educators will find it relatively comprehensible.

Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It.

By James Kouzes and Barry Posner. Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 350 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104. 1993.

Credibility is one of the basic elements of communications and leadership effectiveness according to the experts—the constituents and the followers. People look at the consistency between your words and actions. The fundamental prescription for enhancing credibility is DWYSYWD or "do what you say you will do."

After reviewing 400 case studies, surveying more than 15,000 people, and conducting 40 indepth interviews, these authors arrived at credibility as being the key to leadership. They further developed a three-step process for building credibility. "By clarifying meaning, unifying constituents, and intensifying actions, leaders demonstrate their own commitment to a consistent set of expectations. This process, repeatedly followed, earns leadership credibility and sustains it over time."

You will enjoy this book if you like the variety of research, case studies, quotes from practitioners, practical ideas for building credibility, and big ideas presented, all written in an entertaining style. Readers will be inspired by this personal and confidence-building treatise on leadership.

Leadership and the Customer Revolution.

By Gary Heil, Tom Parker, and Rick Tate. Van Nostrand Reinhold, 115 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003. 1995.

Creating customer-focused organizations is the current rage in the professional and popular literature. The rhetoric rolls off the lips rather easily; the difficult part is actually carrying out the revolution required to become truly centered on customers. A phrase on the book jacket not only proposes a promise about the contents, but depicts the situation accurately: "The Messy, Unpredictable, and Inescapably Human Challenge of Making the Rhetoric of Change a Reality."

Educators espouse parental involvement, student-oriented classrooms, teacher empowerment and such, which in another context would be defined as customer service. Educational reform, choice, charter schools, vouchers, and magnet schools are parallel examples of commercial goals that businesses wage concerning potential customers. Educators, and especially those responsible for communicating with the schools' public, can learn much from studying customer service programs.

How to best serve customers is continually changing. "For example, customers have always wanted value for their dollar. Just yesterday, the focus of that value was quality and price and service. Tomorrow it will be giving customers exactly what they want, exactly when they want it, and who's to say what it will be the day after."

The authors begin their call for revolution by acknowledging the tremendous difficulty with organizational change. They refer "combating the organization's immune system." Change agents know that: "Try to change the

system—it resists. Push harder, and the system simply produces more 'white blood cells' to fight off the infections. It seems the harder we push, the more resistance we encounter. Often, to create change in an organization, it is best to begin by altering the structures of the system to make it uncomfortable for people to perpetuate past practices and to encourage new kinds of performance."

The strategic themes of this book cast the leader as a revolutionary, architect for the system, customer advocate, people motivator, and hero. One problem which the writers fail to address is that one individual likely does not possess all the skills to be successful in each role, nor can one leader typically move through each phase. School superintendents, for example, simply do not last long enough in one district to reach the second stage. Followers are also apt to pigeonhole leaders into one role, complicating the transitions. An omission to the text is a solid development of a team leading an organization through an evolution or revolution.

Every few pages yield practical, concrete techniques or approaches to enhance customer (both internal and external) satisfaction. Much of the material can easily be adapted to use with education "customers."

Superintendents Should Develop Policies and Plans To Deal with Special Interest Groups

by Alicia R. Ingram and Philip T. West

A recent study was conducted of 250 superintendents to determine their perceptions of the effects of religious fundamentalist groups on curriculum in Texas public schools. One of the recommendations arising from the study was that superintendents should develop sound policies and procedures to deal with such issues as textbook selections, sex education, challenges to library books and materials, and demands for changes in curriculum by special interest groups. Another was to include a variety of community members on advisory and planning committees, including those who are part of the Religious Right. A third was to create school-community partnerships that have total community involvement as a primary goal.

A majority of school superintendents believed that the Religious Right was having an effect on the curriculum of school districts throughout Texas. However, they did not feel that it was having an effect on the curriculum in their own school districts. Bordering on agreement were the statements that religious fundamental groups were not only influencing textbook selections in Texas, but also increasing their level of activity in education there. There was also some indication that superintendents felt these groups were increasing their influence over state legislators who make laws governing education. The statement that queried superintendents about whether these groups were also responsible for increasing religious activities in school districts in Texas had a mean of 3.231, indicating that superintendents were only slightly better than neutral in their feelings toward this statement.

When the variable size of school district enrollment for participating superintendents in school districts (G1) with less than an enrollment of 1,000 and in those (G2) with more than an enrollment of 1,000 was tested, five significant differences became apparent, four of which were at the .05 level of significance and only one at the .01 level. All except one of these mean differences were in the strongly disagree to disagree categories, with only one set of means that ranged from near agree to agree in the Likert scale categories. This statement was "are increasing their level of activity in education in the State of Texas" and had means of 3.853 (G1) and 4.108 (G2) and a level of significance at the .05 level (0.0161). This would seem to suggest that large school districts are more likely than small school districts to experience some kind of activity from religious fundamentalist groups. At the moment, though, both groups, while feeling that outside interference from religious groups is next to nil in their own school districts, do believe that such interference is already occurring in other school districts in Texas. Thus, the question of where?, if not here, lingers.

When the responses of male and female superintendents were compared, only one significant difference emerged and this difference was between the strongly disagree and agree categories. Females, though, by virtue of their higher mean score for each of the 30 questionnaire statements, did seem to reflect a tad more awareness of religious fundamentalist activity in their school districts than did males, despite their overall agreement.

In an open-ended section of the questionnaire, where superintendents were asked to indicate areas that they thought were being influenced by religious fundamentalist groups either in their school districts or in other Texas public school districts, textbooks (13 responses) ranked highest in frequency followed by curriculum (9), school prayer/moment of silence (9), health education (8), and sex education (6). In a second part, superintendents were asked to indicate ways in which they thought religious fundamentalist groups have exerted political power within their school district. Here the responses with the highest rankings were board meetings/board candidates (11), textbooks (7) and curriculum (4).

In a third part, superintendents were asked to indicate ways in which they have successful-

ly dealt with political pressures exerted by these within their school districts. Their two highest ranking responses were be open to their concerns, and include them in planning groups (both 11), followed by communication/information (9), meet with groups and individuals (4), stand firm (4), have board policies in effect and current (3), and listen (3).

Approximately 40% of the Texas public school superintendents participating in the study had five or less years of experience as a superintendent, while another 35% had six to 10 years of experience as superintendent. By the same token 65% of these superintendents had five or less years experience as a superintendent in their own school districts. Only 2% had been a superintendent in their districts for more than 20 years. Participating females numbered 23, or 13.5% of the sample; males numbered 180 or 86.5% of the sample.

A random sample of five superintendents of Texas public schools was drawn from a population of 1057 school districts in five geographical regions in Texas, for a total sample of 250. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part requested responses of a demographic nature: age, gender, salary, years of experience as a superintendent in present district, all districts, in education generally, the enrollment size of the school district, and region service center number. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 30 statements about activities of religious fundamentalist groups both in the respondent's district and across the state. The respondents were asked to react to the 30 statements using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly agree (5) to Strongly disagree (1). In the third, open-ended, part of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to list not more than three areas in either their district or the State of Texas that they believed were being influenced by religious fundamental groups, ways they believed religious fundamentalist groups had exerted power within their school district, and how respondents had successfully dealt with political power exerted by religious fundamentalist in their school districts. The study had an 80% return rate.

Alicia R. Ingram is a former superintendent of the Normangee Independent School District, Normangee, Texas and a recent recipient of a Ph.D. Degree in educational administration from Texas A&M University. She is now a field service agent for the Texas Region XIII Education Service Center.

Philip T. West is a professor of educational administration at Texas A&M University.

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations

A refereed journal–scholarly articles by academic/higher education authorities are refereed by an international editorial review board. The *Journal* also accepts articles by practitioners and administrators in basic (K-12) education and journalists at large.

Scope

Articles are sought on topics such as internal communication and climate, employee motivation, parent involvement, partnerships, working with the news media, community participation, audits, surveying and polls, community service programs for students, communication training, advisory committees, volunteers, writing and speaking, publications, alumni associations, foundations, mentoring, photography, and related topics.

The overall goal of the *Journal* is to support efforts to enhance/foster student achievement and staff productivity, and to provide information to build public knowledge of the value and potential benefits of a sound basic education of our youth. We advocate the concept that the school public relations function must be based on fact and reality as compared to ideals and goals of educators and the community at large.

Style

Scholarly articles should be prepared following style guidelines of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association.

We prefer citations to be numbered sequentially in the text and then detailed following the article. An author can include references of related articles/book with address of publishers—in a separate list. We accept photographs, illustrations and tables as appropriate.

Submissions

- Submit four copies of a manuscript with a letter from the author(s).
- Articles should be 1,000 to 3,500 words in length.
- If produced on a computer, supply a disk, clearly labeled, in ASCII format, IBM format only, with the text copies.
- Include an abstract of the article and a two-three sentence credit for each author on a separate sheet.
- Advise if the article has been published or is being considered elsewhere.
- Queries for articles on specific topics are welcomed.
- SASE. Include a 9" x 12" self-addressed stamped envelope for reply to submissions or queries.
- Response to an article or a query is usually conveyed to an author within 60 days.

Address manuscripts and correspondence to Albert E. Holliday, Editor and Publisher, *Journal of Educational Relations*, Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657 (UPS address-1830 Walnut St., Camp Hill, PA 17011) 717-761-6620.

Previous *Journals* are available in microfilm from University Microfilm Int., 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Refer to *Journal of Educational Communications* (1975-83), *Journal of Educational Public Relations* (1984-95) and *Journal of Educational Relations* (1995-).

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1. I will accept responsibility for all my actions.
2. I will respect the dignity and property of my fellow students and teachers and will never seek to do them harm.
3. I will keep all the promises I make, fulfilling the trust that other people place in me.
4. I will complete projects and courses of study which I have begun.
5. I will strive for excellence in all my work and will respect achievement in my fellow students.
6. I will discipline myself to listen, learn and study, recognizing that long-run achievement is more important to my happiness than short-run pleasure.
7. I will not use any substance which will destroy my health and undermine my dignity.
8. I will respect the authority of my parents and teachers, because that authority is necessary for the welfare of my family, school and community.
9. I will train myself to be useful to others.
10. I will work together with others to improve my school, community and world.

***American Values* has been endorsed by the Michigan Association of School Boards "to provide moral support for moral behavior in these difficult times of social change."**